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Emotional Intimacy and its Intersection with Traditional Masculine Gender Ideology

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There is significant debate in the literature regarding how to best define emotional intimacy. Definitions range in detail but collectively suggest that it can be considered both a global feature of relationships and a dynamic interpersonal process. While researchers have yet to agree on a definition, a substantial amount of empirical literature has supported the interpersonal process model of intimacy (Reis & Shaver, 1988) as a valid depiction of emotionally intimate processes in heterosexual couples. The conceptual version of this model includes an interchange of *self-disclosure* and *empathetic responding* as well as perceptual elements like the *interpretive filter* and the *motives, needs, goals, and fears* components. Building on the theoretical work of Reis and Shaver, subsequent authors have extended this work by empirically supporting and then enhancing the basic structure. While both rigorous and informative, these studies have collectively failed to consider how gender socialization impacts the embodiment of this model. Building upon the limitations of the current literature, this study explored the contributions of self-disclosure to emotional intimacy and the effects of traditional masculine gender ideology on this association. In doing this, the current research also explored the contributions of the perceptual elements of the model, which have been previously overlooked in studies. One hundred and twenty three heterosexual couples participated in this study. Participants responded to an online survey that included measures of self-disclosure, traditional masculine gender ideology, expectations of self-disclosure and emotional intimacy. Results showed that the effect of men's gender traditionalism on women's emotional intimacy happened by way of men's restricted self-disclosure. Also supported by the data, women's expectations of their partner's

self-disclosure mediated the effect that men's self-disclosure had on women's emotional intimacy, which further underscored the importance of the interpretive filter found in the Reis and Shaver model. Finally, tests for moderation suffered from low power and were subsequently inconclusive. Suggestions for future research as well as implications for clinical work follow the discussion of these findings.

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"We can do no great things, only small things with great love" – Mother Teresa

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Intimacy is a complex phenomenon that has been repeatedly discussed and examined within the social science literature. Despite regular discourse on this topic, researchers have yet to converge on a definitive definition. This ambiguity exists not only because intimacy is a multifaceted concept, but also because it is an obscure interpersonal process that exists between individuals with separate perspectives, making intimacy difficult to define in a way that represents the entire experience. Even more challenging, intimacy exists within a social context that imbues it with meaning and shapes its significance. Undeterred by these obstacles, scholars have continued in their efforts to understand this process because they believe it to be an essential component for successful interpersonal relationships (Mosier, 2006). Experiences of intimacy have been linked with the physical (Ditzen, Hoppmann, & Klumb, 2008) and psychological (Prager & Buhrmester, 1998) well-being of individuals as well as the health of romantic relationships (Mirgain & Cordova, 2007). Researchers have also found that the deficit of intimacy is related to relationship distress (Herrington et al., 2008) and that couples commonly report a lack of emotional affection as their reason for seeking marital therapy (Doss, Simpson, & Christensen, 2004). This makes it of particular interest for those invested in the relational health of couples. By better understanding the mechanisms through which intimacy is created and maintained in relationships, clinicians can help to improve functioning for clients who experience distress in their relationships.

A substantial amount of empirical literature has supported the interpersonal process model of intimacy (Reis & Shaver, 1988) as a valid depiction of emotionally intimate processes in heterosexual couples (Castellani, 2006; Herrington, 2008; Laurenceau, Barrett, & Pietromonaco, 1998; Laurenceau, Barrett, & Rovine, 2005; Lippert & Prager, 2001; Manne et

al., 2004; Mitchell et al., 2008). This model describes the interchange of self-disclosure and empathetic responding between romantic partners as key components for the development and maintenance of intimacy. In the time since Reis and Shaver first published this model, other authors have expanded on the general process by exploring moderating factors like the type of self-disclosure and the gender of partners. While these studies have been both rigorous and informative, most of these studies have overlooked the same issue. Consistently these authors have found that men and women experience the process of intimacy differently, but in their interpretations of their findings, they each fail to consider how gender socialization might help to explain this difference. Said differently, these authors conclude *that* men and women experience the process of emotional intimacy differently without considering *why* this difference exists. This is the oversight the current study addresses by overlaying an understanding of gender *as a social construction* on the interpersonal process model of intimacy in an effort to explain *why.*

Early feminist authors like Unger (1979) have deconstructed the formation of social identities and argued that gender exists separately from biological sex. Instead of innate characteristics, masculinity and femininity are constructed through social interactions, during which individuals receive culturally bound messages about appropriate behaviors for men and women. These social expectations then organize the behavior of individuals in their interpersonal relationships, including their romantic relationships, making intimacy a gender salient experience. As a specific example of this point, gender theorists within the men and masculinity field have argued that, because idealized masculinity in Anglo-Western societies includes emotional stoicism, the endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology can inhibit men's self-disclosure of emotional and personally relevant information, which can in turn influence their experiences within interpersonal relationships (Levant, Rankin, Williams, Hasan, &

Smalley, 2010; O'Neil, 2008; Mahalik, Locke, Theodore, Cournoyer, & Lloyd, 2001). Recognizing gender as a social construction rather than as an innate characteristic could result in a significantly different interpretation of results when studying the interpersonal process model of intimacy, and ultimately, it may provide a better understanding of how this model functions to promote intimacy in couples.

A preliminary examination of Reis and Shaver's (1988) model using gender as a social construction looked specifically at the effects of gender-role traditionalism on intimacy in heterosexual couples (Marshall, 2008). Specifically, this study tested whether the endorsement of either traditional or egalitarian gender-roles influenced couples' reported levels of intimacy and if this dynamic was mediated by the level of partners' self-disclosure. To date, Marshall's work remains the only study that has explored how gender as a social construction influences couples' experiences of Reis and Shaver's model and it is her finding that men's self-disclosure mediates the relationship between their own gender-role traditionalism and their partners' intimacy that is of particular interest for this study. Focusing on the contributions of self-disclosure to intimacy and the effects of traditional masculine gender ideology on this association, this study will attempt to disentangle the effects of masculine gender ideology on couples' experiences of intimacy. In doing so, this study will also examine the contributions of the often overlooked interpretive filter to the interpersonal process model of intimacy.

Organization of the Dissertation

The following chapter includes a discussion of relevant literature for this investigation. Beginning with an explanation of how intimacy contributes to the health of romantic relationships, chapter two then includes a synthesis of the many definitions of intimacy as well as a rationale for focusing on emotional intimacy as a unique concept. This is followed by a critical

analysis of the published research on the interpersonal process model of intimacy (Reis and Shaver, 1988) and an illustration of how the current study addresses two important oversights in this literature. Finally, the chapter ends with a statement of the research hypotheses and a description of the tested theoretical model.

Chapter three details the methods used in this study including recruitment strategies, data collection procedures and descriptions of the included measures. This chapter also incorporates an explanation of the multiphasic structure of the data analysis as well as logic for selecting the employed statistical tests.

Chapter four includes a description of the results for each phase of the study. Details of both the exploratory factor analysis and the confirmatory factor analysis are followed by results from the phase two hypothesis tests. Phase two results begin with findings from preliminary analyses of the data and end with outcomes from the tests for mediation and moderation.

Chapter five discusses the current study findings, the conclusions that can be drawn from these findings, the limitations of this study and both research and clinical implications for this work.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Current research widely supports that intimacy is an important component of successful romantic relationships (Durana, 1997; Hook, Gerstein, Detterich, & Gridley, 2003; Laurenceau et al., 1998; Mosier, 2006; Reis, 1990; Thelen, Vander Wal, Thomas, & Harmon, 2000). Numerous authors have directly linked levels of intimacy with relationship satisfaction (Cordova, Gee, & Warren, 2005; Greef & Malherbe, 2001; Hassebrauck & Fehr, 2002; Laurenceau, Troy, & Carver, 2005; Mirgain & Cordova, 2007; Schaefer & Olson, 1981; Thomas, Albrecht, & White, 1984; Tolstedt & Stokes, 1983), while others have correlated intimacy with relationship endurance (Gold, 1997; Kersten, 1990; Marshall, 2008). Authors have also asserted that levels of intimacy are associated with the psychological and physical well-being of partners (Ditzen et al., 2008; Moss & Schwebel, 1993; Ornish, 1998; Prager, 1995, 1999; Prager & Buhrmester, 1998; Waring & Patton, 1984; Reis & Franks, 1994). Similarly, studies have shown that a deficit of intimacy is related to relationship distress (Herrington et al., 2008; Kersten, 1990; Sullivan, Pasch, Johnson, & Bradbury, 2010). Sullivan et al. (2010) which suggests that deficits in empathy and validation, thought to be components of intimacy, predict couples' deterioration in problem-solving and conflict resolution. It is not surprising then, that a lack of both emotional affection and intimacy are some of the most common explanations for why couples come to therapy (Doss et al., 2004; Geiss & O'Leary, 1981; Whisman, Dixon, & Johnson, 1997). Given the connection between intimacy and relationship health, it is easy to understand why facilitating emotional connections between partners is the main focus of many empirically supported clinical models of therapy. Models like Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) emphasize connectedness among partners and support the expression of marginalized emotions as an agent of change in therapy (Johnson, 2004). Facilitating intimacy in couples may

also serve as a buffering effect for relational conflict (Laurenceau, Troy et al., 2005). Laurenceau, Troy et al. (2005) which suggests that increasing relationship satisfaction depends more on increasing intimacy in relationships than it does on decreasing conflict. In a similar vein, Herrington and colleagues (2008) concluded that "Once the emotional bond between partners becomes compromised, resilience to daily relationship stressors and conflicts likely dissolves" (p. 347). With all of this empirical support for the significance of intimacy, the question then becomes, what exactly is intimacy and how is it engendered within couples?

Before continuing this discussion of intimacy, it is important to note that this work focuses specifically on the experiences of intimacy in heterosexual couples. Although it is not my intention to further marginalize the experiences of sexual and gender minorities, the theories and measures used to study this topic were developed in a heteronormative context and may not be applicable to the experiences of sexual or gender minority couples. Rather than impose heteronormative assumptions on the experiences of sexual or gender minority couples, this work focuses specifically on the experiences of intimacy in heterosexual couples with the understanding that future work will examine similar concepts in same-sex couples.

Understanding Intimacy

Definitions of Intimacy

When the term *intimacy* is used in conversation, the context of the conversation can often allow us to infer its meaning. As an example, a therapist might ask a couple when they were last intimate with each other to assess the health of their sexual connection. In this situation, the meaning of intimacy is clear because the context of the conversation implies that it is a physical behavior. While the general use of the word "intimacy" does not create confusion in conversation, understanding the specifics of what academics mean when they refer to intimacy is

essential for understanding and interpreting their results. Depending on the discussion, "intimacy" could be used to refer to sexual encounters, feelings of closeness (whether platonic or romantic), or even the characteristics of a surrounding environment. Without a clear understanding of the specific meaning, researchers can misinterpret study findings and draw misguided conclusions.

A foundational academic reference to intimacy and its meaning was made by Eric Erikson in his cornerstone book *Childhood and Society* (1950). In this text Erikson writes of eight developmental tasks individuals must master as they mature and develop. In his discussion of the *intimacy vs. isolation* stage, he describes intimacy as a major component of healthy development. According to Erikson, after forging a strong individual identity during the *identity vs. role confusion* stage, individuals must unite their identities with another person in order to form a committed interpersonal connection.

> Thus, the young adult, emerging from the search for identity, is eager and willing to fuse his identity with that of others. He is ready for intimacy, that is, the capacity to commit himself to concrete affiliations and partnerships and to develop the ethical strength to abide by such commitments, even though they may call for significant sacrifices and compromises (p. 263).

Essentially, Erikson describes intimacy as both an attachment and commitment to another person and uses it to describe the entire process of developing romantic relationships. In doing this, however, Erikson gives little indication of what it takes to forge this bond and successfully achieve intimacy. While Erikson's description of intimacy is mostly conceptual and can at times be intangible, its limitations do not overshadow the significance of his work as pioneering scholarship on intimacy. What distinguished Erikson's work at the time was his focus on the

significance of interpersonal relationships as a driving force for development. Erikson's discussion of intimacy and isolation offered an initial glimpse of intimacy as an interpersonal process.

In the time since Erikson's (1950) discussion of intimacy, multiple authors have tried to document the experience of intimacy by developing formal definitions (Moss & Schwebel, 1993; Prager, 1995; Schaefer & Olson, 1981).These efforts range in method and scope, and collectively allow for the identification of common themes among the definitions. Sometimes referred to as a simple feeling of closeness (L'Abate & Frey, 1981; Sternberg, 1987, 1997; Karpel, 1999; Sinclair & Dowdy, 2005) or as a state of relatedness (Ben-Ari & Lavee, 2007), the term intimacy implies some form of bondedness between people (Sternberg, 1997). Mosier (2006) explains that when intimacy exists in a relationship, the partners are responsive to one another in a way that is unique to that relationship. Prager's (1995) working definition of intimacy includes self-disclosure, attentive listening, interpersonal understanding, and positive affect as components.

Because attempts to define intimacy have been vast, authors have conducted meta-level reviews to consolidate the different ways researchers have tried to define intimacy (e.g. Moss & Schwebel, 1993). In their comprehensive review of the literature on intimacy, Moss and Schwebel identify three types of definitions for intimacy: 1) general definitions 2) multidimensional definitions, and 3) operational definitions. General definitions include those that are vague subjective interpretations of intimacy. The multidimensional definitions, while more precise than the general definitions of intimacy, are also considered subjectively derived but are different in that they include specific components or precursors for intimacy. Moss and Schwebel's third category of definitions, operational definitions, are assumed to be less subjective and include behavioral descriptions, self-report measures, and relationship status

indicators of intimacy. Although the operational definitions are reportedly less subjective than the general and multidimensional definitions, Moss and Schwebel comment that the operational definitions are subsequently too narrow and remained situationally dependent. Integrating the definitions of previous authors in order to develop a widely applicable but still rigorous definition, Moss and Schwebel developed the following definition of intimacy "Intimacy in enduring romantic relationships is determined by the level of commitment and positive affective, cognitive, and physical closeness one experiences with a partner in a reciprocal (although not necessarily symmetrical) relationship" (p. 33). This definition specifies five components of intimacy: commitment, positive emotions, cognitive closeness, physical closeness and mutuality. While useful in its ability to encapsulate the different elements of intimacy, this broad-reaching definition again reflects the ambiguity that can occur when using the term intimacy without specifying its meaning and reinforces the need for articulating how intimacy has been operationalized in a study.

The Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships inventory (PAIR, Schaefer and Olson, 1981) was an early attempt to operationalize this concept and has been one of the more widely used measures of intimacy in romantic relationships. In his original writing Olson (1975 as cited in Schaefer & Olson, 1981) distinguished seven types of intimacy: emotional, social, intellectual, sexual, recreational, spiritual, and aesthetic. Building on this early conceptualization, Schaefer and Olson (1981) dropped spiritual and aesthetic intimacy and developed the PAIR inventory as it exists today. This inventory measures global levels of intimacy in couples by assessing five distinct domains and has been the foundation of a wide body of literature (Denton, Burleson, Clark, Rodriguez, & Hobbs, 2000; Durana, 1997; Gordon, Temple, & Adams, 2005; Herrington, 2008; Thelen et al., 2000). Although measuring global levels of intimacy can be

useful for studies that include it as a predictor or outcome variable, research focused on the experience and process of intimacy requires a more narrow definition.

Among the different suggested components of intimacy, emotional expression has been supported as a unique contributor to relationship satisfaction and quality (Cordova et al., 2005; Mirgain & Cordova, 2007). Cordova and colleagues (2005) documented a direct relationship between emotional expression and intimacy when they found that emotional skillfulness, the ability to identify and express emotions, influenced relationship health in couples by facilitating intimacy processes. Another study by Minnotte, Pedersen, and Mannon (2010) showed that partners' efforts to attend to their partners' emotions were positively related to marital satisfaction for both men and women. Still another study found that emotional intimacy, defined as the level of emotional support and connectedness in a romantic relationship, served as a buffer against job related stress for partners (McAllister, Thornock, Hammond, Holmes, & Hill, 2012). Collectively, these findings suggest that emotional intimacy, as a distinct concept, may uniquely contribute to relationship satisfaction and quality. Because of this association, the current study focuses specifically on the experience of emotional intimacy within heterosexual couples.

Defining Emotional Intimacy

Similar to the difficulty of defining intimacy in general, authors have disagreed on what it means to be emotionally intimate. Perlman and Fehr (1987) define *emotional intimacy* as the "closeness and interdependence of partners, the extent of self-disclosure, and the warmth or affection experienced within the relationship" (p. 16). Sternberg (1997) simply states that it is "[a feeling] of closeness, connectedness, and bondedness in loving relationships" (p. 315). Sinclair and Dowdy (2005) suggest "a perception of closeness to another that is conducive to the sharing of personal feelings, accompanied by expectations of understanding, affirmation, and

demonstrations of caring" (p. 194) as the definition of emotional intimacy. Each of these descriptions speaks to self-disclosure, empathetic responsiveness, and positive affect as components of emotional intimacy. Sinclair and Dowdy went beyond simply defining emotional intimacy and developed the Emotional Intimacy Scale (EIS) that evaluates the level of emotional intimacy in a close relationship. This measure was created in response to the PAIR inventory (Schaefer & Olson, 1981) with the intention of creating a more concise measure of emotional intimacy as a unique construct. Rather than including subscales that measure all aspects of intimacy like the PAIR (i.e. emotional, social, intellectual, sexual and recreational), the EIS includes questions that focus on the emotional components of intimacy including the expression of thoughts and feelings, the perception of acceptance and the feeling of support.

Emotional intimacy as interpersonal process. A number of authors have argued that, in addition to conceptualizing emotional intimacy as a global feature of relationships, it can also be understood as a dynamic interpersonal process (Reis & Shaver, 1988; Cordova & Scott, 2001; Hook et al., 2003; Prager, 1995). According to these authors, emotional intimacy is the outcome of "a transactional, interpersonal process in which self-disclosure and partner responsiveness are key components" (Laurenceau et al., 1998, p. 1238). The *interpersonal process model of intimacy*, originally presented by Reis and Shaver (1988) and later formalized by Reis and Patrick (1996), is the most established conceptual model of emotional intimacy to date (Mitchell, 2008). This model has served as the theoretical basis for numerous articles, each of which uses it as a foundation for further theoretical and empirical exploration (Castellani, 2006; Heller & Wood, 1998; Herrington, 2008; Manne et al., 2004; Marshall, 2008; Mitchell, 2008 ; Mitchell et al., 2008; Morry, 2005; Laurenceau et al., 1998; Laurenceau, Barrett et al., 2005; Laurenceau, Rivera, Schaffer, & Pietromonaco, 2004; Lawrence et al., 2008; Lippert & Prager, 2001; Reis,

1990; Reis, 1998; Reis, Clark, & Holmes, 2004; Shelton, Trail, West, & Bergsieker, 2010). Reis and Shaver's original model begins with one partner's *self-disclosure* of personally relevant and revealing information. Following this admission, the listening partner is *responsive* in a manner that is perceived by the disclosing partner as understanding and validating. The outcome of this exchange is increased emotional intimacy if the speaker experiences the responding partner as understanding, accepting of and caring for the speaker. Essential to this increase in emotional intimacy, however, are the perceptual elements of this model. These are included by Reis and Shaver as the *interpretive filter* component and the *motives, needs, goals, and fears* component. Specifically, the interpretive filter consists of the expectations and schema used by each partner to register and then interpret his or her partner's behavior (Reis & Shaver, 1988). Reis and Shaver cite social psychological research (Bowlby, 1969, 1982; Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Kelly, 1955; Mischel, 1973) as inspiration for this model component and explain that this work is relevant for understanding how individuals' past experiences can influence their interpretation of their partners' behavior. Specifically, past experiences are integrated into an individual's sense-of-self in relation to others and are translated into expectations about interpersonal interactions. These expectations are considered the filter through which both partners interpret each other's behavior. Furthermore, the interpretive filter and the subsequent behavioral response of each partner are influenced by his or her motives, needs, goals, and fears. The motives, needs, goals, and fears component of the model is meant to capture the individual difference factors that affect each partner's tendency toward emotional intimacy. Examples of these individual differences include variations in intelligence, memory, interpersonal skill and motivations for attending to each other. When describing this component, Reis and Shaver write "It is unsafe to assume that [partner] A has perpetual constant tendencies toward intimacy that are independent of specific

desires, fears, and goals" (p. 376).Thus, how the listening partner perceives the initial self-disclosure and whether the speaker experiences the response as sufficiently responsive are contingent on both partner's expectations of each other's behavior and the individual differences that influence their tendencies toward emotional intimacy.

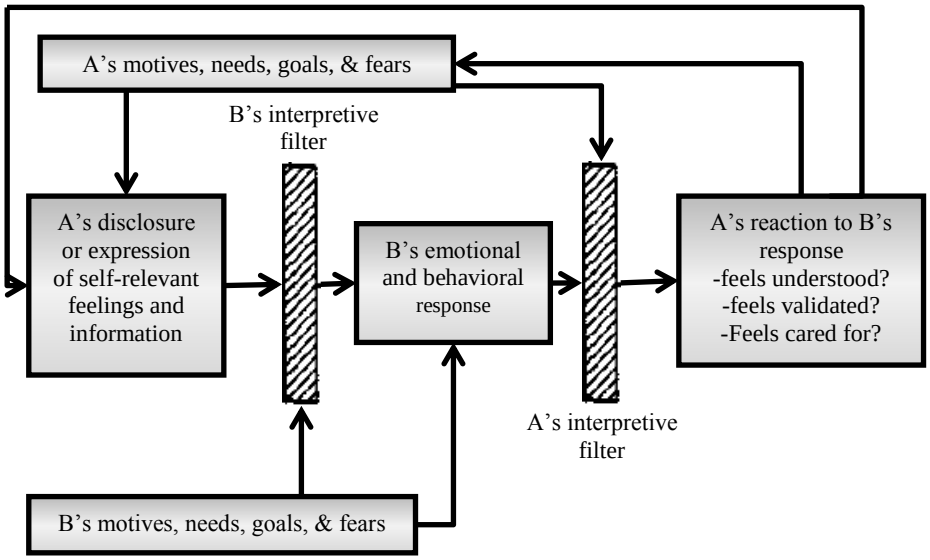

Figure 1. Interpersonal process model of intimacy as presented in Reis and Shaver (1988).

Building on the work of Reis and Shaver (1988), subsequent authors have empirically tested the basic structure of the model and then studied different factors influencing this structure. These extensions of Reis and Shaver's work have built a legacy of research that supports the correlation of both self-disclosure and empathetic responding with levels of emotional intimacy in couples. Because of the existing empirical support for this model and its specification of emotional intimacy as a unique concept, emotional intimacy will be conceptualized in this study using the interpersonal process model of intimacy framework. Before expanding on the specific objectives of this study, however, it is important to track the development of this model and have a clear conception of how it is believed to operate.

Empirical Support for the Interpersonal Process Model of Intimacy

Self-disclosure and partner responsiveness components. Providing the earliest empirical support for Reis and Shaver's (1988) model, Laurenceau et al. (1998) explored whether partner responsiveness mediated the relationship between self-disclosure and levels of reported emotional intimacy. Additionally, these authors were interested in determining if self-disclosure from the listening partner predicted the level of emotional intimacy for the original self-disclosing partner. To test these hypotheses, Laurenceau and colleagues conducted two studies using a daily-diary method whereby participants reported on their own self-disclosure, their partner's self-disclosure, their partner's responsiveness and the degree to which they felt intimate immediately following an interpersonal interaction of at least 10 minutes. Although the authors found that self-disclosure and partner self-disclosure independently contributed to the prediction of emotional intimacy, the results of the test for mediation were somewhat inconclusive in that the mediation effect was not as strong in magnitude as the authors had hoped. Laurenceau and colleagues attributed this to their narrow operationalization of partner responsiveness and subsequently modified their second study to include an expanded measure of partner responsiveness. In doing this, they hoped to capture more of what their participants defined as "responsive" in order to improve their construct validity and strengthen the mediation effect of partner responsiveness. Although the authors did find a stronger mediation effect in their second study, the conclusions of this research remain limited for a few reasons. First, each study relied on a convenience sample of college students limiting the generalizability of their findings. More problematic, however, was that in both studies responses were collected from individual participants without obtaining the perspectives of the responding partners, meaning that Laurenceau and colleagues captured only one side of the interpersonal processes they

claimed to study. Additionally, the study procedure did not stipulate that the intimate interactions must occur within the context of an established relationship. Instead the participants were told to record any social interaction they had throughout a week that was dyadic and that lasted longer than 10 minutes. So while these findings do contribute to our understanding of the process of momentary intimate interactions, we are limited in the conclusions we can draw from this research regarding the cumulative effects of intimate interactions on global levels of emotional intimacy. Furthermore, we must also be cautious in our applications of these findings to the experiences of couples. Despite these limitations, however, these studies still significantly contribute to the extant literature by demonstrating that self-disclosure and partner responsiveness are important components of the Reis and Shaver's model.

Expansions on the self-disclosure and partner responsiveness components. Lippert and Prager (2001) also found support for Reis and Shaver's (1988) model, but they tested it within the context of romantic relationships. To do this, these authors used a daily-diary method and asked 113 cohabitating couples to record what occurred for them during self-defined intimate interactions. An additional purpose for this study was to expand on the Reis and Shaver model by testing whether personal characteristic and features of a particular interaction predicted levels of intimacy. Interestingly, this study found no support for its hypothesis that emotional intimacy would be predicted by characteristics like gender, sense of well-being, and personality. What these authors did find, however, was that the characteristics of an interaction, the type of self-disclosure, the degree of perceived understanding, and the nature of affect predicted emotional intimacy for couples.

Exploring Reis and Shaver's (1988) model in the context of stressful life events, Manne et al. (2004) observed 98 couples dealing with a breast cancer diagnosis as they discussed both

generic marital issues and cancer related issues. Similar to the mediation effect found by Laurenceau et al. (1998), this study also found that perceived responsiveness partially mediated the relationship between self-disclosure and emotional intimacy. Interestingly, the mediation effect found by these authors was substantially stronger than those found in either of the studies done by Laurenceau and colleagues. Another notable finding from this study was the difference that emerged between genders. Unlike Lippert and Prager (2001), Manne and colleagues found distinctly different experiences for men and women with regard to self-disclosure. The reported levels of intimacy for the female breast cancer patients in this study were not predicted by their own self-disclosure over and above the effect of their partners' responsiveness. For their partners however, self-disclosure, partner self-disclosure, and perceived partner responsiveness all predicted feelings of emotional intimacy. Together these findings suggest that the experience of emotional intimacy for women may depend more on the behavior of their partners, while for men their own behavior was predictive of emotional intimacy.

At the time Laurenceau, Barrett et al. (2005) conducted their follow-up study, exploration of the Reis and Shaver (1988) model had not moved beyond looking at whether self-disclosure and partner responsiveness were related to emotional intimacy as an isolated process. Building upon these findings, Laurenceau, Barrett and colleague further extricated the dynamics of the interpersonal process model of intimacy by looking at how global levels of relationship satisfaction and demand/withdraw dynamics influenced couples' daily experiences of emotional intimacy. Using a more sophisticated version of the daily-diary method described in their earlier study (Laurenceau et al. 1998), Laurenceau, Barrett and colleague asked 96 couples to report on the amount of self-disclosure, partner self-disclosure, partner responsiveness and intimacy they believed occurred during a particular day. Participants recorded their responses over 42

consecutive days and these responses were analyzed in conjunction with their global feelings of relationship satisfaction and their level of demand/withdraw communication patterns. From this data, the researchers were able to capture fluctuations in intimacy on a day-to-day basis and could demonstrate that average rates of emotional intimacy were related to couples overall sense of relationship satisfaction and their demand/withdraw communication patterns. More specifically, the results of their analysis showed that participants with higher levels of global satisfaction and lower levels of demand/withdraw communication patterns averaged higher levels of emotional intimacy across the 42 days. As expected, the results of this study also supported earlier findings that self-disclosure, partner self-disclosure and partner responsiveness were associated with emotional intimacy, that partner responsiveness partially mediated the effect between self-disclosure and emotional intimacy, and that partner responsiveness predicted emotional intimacy over and above the effects of self-disclosure. Similar to Manne et al. (2004), support for gender differences in how both self-disclosure and perceived partner responsiveness predicted emotional intimacy was also found within this study. Laurenceau Barrett and colleague were able to use their data to specify the different patterns that emerged for women and men. Closer scrutiny of their findings indicated that self-disclosure was a greater predictor of emotional intimacy for men than women, while partner responsiveness was more predictive of emotional intimacy for women compared with men. According to Laurenceau Barrett and colleague, their findings provided tentative support that mediation effects differ based on gender such that greater mediation exists for women than it does for men. These findings might explain why some of the preceding studies were unable to find significant mediation effects for partner responsiveness. They also highlight how essential it is that researchers explore the interplay of gender in this model and consider how it might moderate the model components.

A short while after the work of Laurenceau, Barrett et al. (2005), a string of dissertations and one publication emerged from Texas A&M with the specific intention of exploring moderation effects (Castellani, 2006; Herrington, 2008; Mitchell, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2008). Castellani's (2006) work examined whether the degree of risk involved in self-disclosing to an intimate partner moderated the relationship between self-disclosure, empathy and emotional intimacy. To test her hypothesis, Castellani asked couples to discuss two topics, a risky topic and a safe topic, while being observed by researchers. The couples were then asked to report on their levels of emotional intimacy immediately following these discussions. Using the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM; Kashy & Kenny, 2000; Kenny & Cook, 1999) to analyze her data, Castellani compared self-disclosure, empathetic responding and intimacy on low-risk and high-risk levels. This allowed her to determine whether the relationship between self-disclosure and emotional intimacy, as well as empathetic responding and emotional intimacy, differed depending on the riskiness of the conversation. While the conceptual ideas raised in this dissertation contributed a great deal to the theoretical discourse on Reis and Shaver's model, the results related to moderation were tenuous and marginally significant. Only the relationship between empathetic responding and emotional intimacy was somewhat moderated by the riskiness of the conversation. Despite these limited findings the theoretical contributions of this study highlight the importance of looking at preexisting factors that might moderate the relationship between self-disclosure, empathetic responding and intimacy. Furthermore, Castellani's work was the first to account for the interdependence of couple data while exploring Reis and Shaver's model, making it an important contribution to the literature.

Drawing from the same data set and using similar methods as Castellani (2006), Mitchell et al. (2008) expanded on the earlier dissertation by looking specifically at whether gender

moderated partners' experiences of self-disclosure and empathetic responding. Interestingly, Mitchell and colleagues found similar results as Castellani regarding a lack of moderation from riskiness of conversation, but unlike Castellani these authors found significant gender related patterns within their data. Although men's self-disclosure and empathetic responding were predictive of their level of emotional intimacy, women's level of emotional intimacy was predicted by their partners' self-disclosure and empathetic responding. Additionally women in the study had significantly higher levels of emotional self-disclosure than the men, but both women and men showed equal levels of empathetic responding during their discussions. The findings of this study are important because they provide an initial look at how gender may moderate the interpersonal process model of intimacy.

Perceptual components of the interpersonal process model of intimacy. Born from these earlier studies, Mitchell (2008) and Herrington (2008) looked at how individual characteristics like attachment styles and emotional dysregulation moderated Reis and Shaver's (1988) model. Conceptualizing attachment styles as a part of the interpretive filter, Mitchell found support for the association of individuals' attachment styles and their perceptions of self-disclosure. Specifically, she tested whether partners' attachment style predicted discrepancies between partners' self-reported self-disclosures and their observed self-disclosures. Mitchell then tested whether both self-reported and observer reported self-disclosures predicted intimacy in the partners. Results from these tests showed that attachment style did predict discrepancies in self-reported and observer-reported self-disclosures and that both self and observer reported self-disclosures were predictive of intimacy. Together Mitchell's findings suggest that individuals' perceptions contribute to their experience of emotional intimacy, but more research is needed to explicitly study the contributions of the interpretive filter as a distinct component. Herrington

found that partners' ability to regulate their own emotions influenced their experience of emotional intimacy. Her findings showed that emotional dysregulation moderated the associations between self-disclosure, empathetic responding and intimacy in partners. While Herrington did not explicitly conceptualize emotional dysregulation as a perceptual component, the ability to regulate one's emotions fits well within the motives, needs, goals, and fears component of Reis and Shaver's model and her findings provide the only available insight into this model component. Together the work of Mitchell and Herrington provide initial insight into how the perceptual components intersect with the other components of the model. More than anything, however, these studies highlight the current gaps in our understanding of the perceptual components of the Reis and Shaver model.

Integrating Previous Research on the Interpersonal Process Model of Intimacy

Each study contributes in a small but unique way to an improved understanding of Reis and Shaver's (1988) model, and when seen together they provide a better picture of what is involved in the development and maintenance of emotional intimacy. Together they suggest that both mutual self-disclosure and empathetic responding are significant components of emotional intimacy and that when couples engage in these behaviors they are more likely to report feeling emotionally intimate in their relationships. What is also known from these studies is that, over and above daily fluctuation in emotional intimacy, relationship characteristics like global levels of satisfaction and the presence of demand/withdraw communication patterns predict partners' reported levels of emotional intimacy (Laurenceau, Barrett et al., 2005). Furthermore, the current research indicates that characteristics inherent in the moment-to-moment intimate interactions of couples like the nature of the affect (Lippert & Prager, 2001) or the type of self-disclosure (Laurenceau et al., 1998; Mitchell et al., 2008) influence this relationship and should be

accounted for when looking at what cultivates and maintains emotional intimacy in couples. Looking collectively at the current research, we can conclude that partners' experience of self-disclosure and their expressions of empathy when responding to each other are important elements of emotional intimacy.

What is less clear from this body of research is how the interpretive filter component and the motives, needs, goals, and fears component interact with the self-disclosure and partner responsiveness components in order to influence emotional intimacy. This area of research remains largely unexplored. Mitchell's (2008) work is the only study to explicitly include a variable meant to account for the interpretive filter, but even this work does not directly test how the interpretive filter affects the associations of self-disclosure and partner responsiveness with emotional intimacy. Specifically, tests examining how the interpretive filter may function as a mediator or moderator are needed. Mitchell's use of an attachment measure may also have captured only one element of the interpretive filter, and so a measure explicitly asking about expectations might be a better operationalization of the interpretive filter. Addressing the need for tests of moderation and a more precise measure of the interpretive filter, one goal of this study was to create a measure that assessed partners' expectations related to self-disclosure and then to use this measure to test whether expectations, conceptualized as the interpretive filter, moderated the interpersonal process model of intimacy.

Expectations in relationships. Relational expectations take two forms, predictive expectations and prescriptive expectations (Staines & Libby, 1986). Predictive expectations include beliefs about what is likely to occur in an interpersonal interaction, while prescriptive expectations consist of what one believes should occur. Communication researchers Kelley and Burgoon (1991) explain that violations of prescriptive expectations are especially relevant for

satisfaction in relationships. This is because when one fails to meet the expectations of another, the quality of that relationship is called into question. With this violation comes an evaluation of the violation as either reflective of the relationship or not reflective of the relationship. The final assessment of the violation is a function of the magnitude of the difference between the prescriptive expectations and the perceived behavior. Although Reis and Shaver (1988) do not specify the type of expectations included in the interpretive filter, it seems that measuring partners' perceptions of whether their partner does or does not meet their expectations might best represent the interpretive filter. Guided by this understanding, the current study asked partners explicitly to what degree their expectations of self-disclosure were being met by their partners in order to determine the effect of expectations on the Reis and Shaver model.

Gender and the Interpersonal Process Model of Intimacy

The recurrent support for gender differences in research on the interpersonal process model of intimacy (Reis & Shaver, 1988) also suggests that emotionally intimate processes may not occur devoid of social context. In fact, a discourse on whether men and women experience self-disclosure and empathetic responding differently has emerged from these studies. Despite a few authors who did not find gender differences in their participants' experiences of emotional intimacy (Lippert & Prager, 2001; Castellani, 2006), the majority of studies did find variation between genders. The work of these researchers focused specifically on how differences in gender might translate into distinct experiences of emotional intimacy for men and women. Patterns within these studies showed that men's intimacy levels were predicted more by their own actions (i.e. their own self-disclosure and empathetic responding), while women's levels of intimacy were predicted more by their partners' behavior (i.e. their partners' self-disclosure and empathetic responding) (Manne et al., 2004; Laurenceau, Barrett et al., 2005; Mitchell et al.,

2008). Although these authors discuss gender differences and use them to account for their findings, they do so from an essentialist perspective (England, 2010). Highlighting disparity between genders, they attribute these differences to innate characteristics of males and females without exploring their social components. Collectively these authors have failed to contextualize their understanding of emotional intimacy and place it within its larger gendered context. None of these studies have recognized that gender is socially constructed nor have they considered how this might be influencing the intimate interactions they are studying. Said differently, these authors have concluded *that* men and women experience the interpersonal process model of intimacy differently without considering *why* they experience it differently. Thus, examining this dynamic with a gender lens might offer some insight into the *why*. This is another goal of the current study. Specifically, this study uses gender ideology to examine the effects of gender socialization on partners' experiences of the interpersonal process model of intimacy.

Gender as a social construction. In order to understand how gender as a social construction might influence a couple's experience of emotional intimacy, we should look to authors who specialize in deconstructing the formation of social identities. Unger (1979) argues that gender exists separately from biological sex and that what is perceived as naturally feminine or masculine is the result of messages embedded in all of our social structures. As a socially constructed concept, gender can be thought of as a prescription of behaviors, defined by culturally dependent ideologies, as appropriate for a "male" or for a "female" but that are not dependent on having a "male" body or a "female" body (West and Zimmerman, 1987). Rather than "be" a certain gender, people actively present themselves to others in a way that is consistent with their respective gender ideology (Lorber, 2001). These prescribed behaviors, also

referred to as *gender norms*, are the result of a false but socially reinforced dichotomy between males and females (Gergen, 2009; Kilmartin, 2007). Gender defined in this way is not an attribute of an individual, but rather the name we give to cultural practices that construct 'men' and 'women' as different entities and that gives value to one at the expense of the other. An implication of this dichotomy is that, within Anglo-Western culture, traditional masculine gender ideology is best understood through its opposition to traditional femininity. Kilmartin (2007) writes, "social expectations devalue and punish the open display of vulnerable emotions, orientations toward relationships, and physical self-protection for men because these characteristics are culturally defined as feminine" (p. 7). Masculinity is the antithesis of femininity, so being masculine is to not be feminine. Subsequently, patterns within traditional masculinity reflect emotional restriction, aggression, self-reliance and dominance in relationships (Levant et al., 2010; O'Neil, 2008; Mahalik et al., 2001), while traditional femininity includes emotional expressiveness, passivity, dependence and submission within relationships (Cobb, Walsh, & Priest, 2009; Levant, Richmond, Cook, House, & Aupont, 2007; Lyness, Haddock, & Zimmerman, 2003).

Emotional intimacy as a gender salient experience. From a social construction perspective, the expression of one's gender occurs within interpersonal contexts, making emotional intimacy a gender salient experience. Consider again Laurenceau et al.'s (1998) and Mitchell et al.'s (2008) findings that the disclosure of feelings more than facts is linked with increased emotional intimacy. Given that the literature on gender ideology has linked emotional expression with femininity and emotional stoicism with masculinity (Levant, Hall, Williams, & Hasan, 2009; Levant, Richmond et al., 2007; O'Neil, 2008), it seems plausible that a person's endorsement of traditional gender ideology would have significant implications for his or her

experience of emotional intimacy. This seems especially true for men. Engaging in emotional expression is consistent with idealized femininity and therefore requires men to depart from idealized masculinity. For women, however, the process of emotional intimacy fits well within their gender ideology.

Only one author has specifically considered the influence of gender ideology on Reis and Shaver's (1988) model by using gender-role ideology as a variable for her study (Marshall, 2008). Marshall examined whether self-disclosure and partner responsiveness mediated the association between partners' endorsement of either traditional or egalitarian beliefs about gender roles and their experiences of emotional intimacy. She found that men's gender-role traditionalism was related to women's lower levels of emotional intimacy such that the more traditional a man's gender-role ideology, the more constrained his self-disclosure and the lower his partner rated their emotional intimacy levels. This is consistent with the pattern found by other authors, that women's levels of emotional intimacy were predicted more by their partner's behavior than their own, while men's levels of emotional intimacy was predicted more by their own self-disclosure and their partner's responsiveness (Manne et al., 2004; Laurenceau, Barrett et al., 2005; Mitchell et al., 2008). But unlike the authors of these studies, Marshall's explanation for her findings was not that men and women are inherently different, but rather that men and women are influenced by their social context to behave differently, thus having divergent experiences of emotional intimacy.

Building on current research. As significant as Marshall's (2008) findings are, they are only an initial attempt to consider the effects of gender socialization on emotional intimacy, and consequently, there are a number of ways to expand on her study. One place for further exploration is related to Marshall's finding that men's self-disclosure mediates the relationship

between their own gender-role traditionalism and their partner's reported emotional intimacy. Marshall's finding is congruent with paradigmatic masculinity, but a study by Wilcox and Nock (2006) indicates that there may be more occurring in this dynamic than what Marshall concluded. In their study on equality of emotion work in relationships, Wilcox and Nock hypothesized that women who subscribe to traditional gender ideology would report higher levels of relationship quality than progressive women. Their explanation for this hypothesis was that traditional women would have lower expectations related to equality of emotion work and, in essence, be less disappointed when their male partners did not perform equal levels of emotion work. Progressive women, on the other hand, would expect greater equality in their division of emotion work and would be less satisfied with their partner's lower levels of emotion work. Wilcox and Nock claimed that their results supported their hypothesis. According to them, their findings showed that traditional women did indeed report higher marital quality than the progressive women and these authors concluded that it was because traditional women experienced less of a deficit related to their expectations of their partner's emotion work. Critiques of this work, however, offer alternative interpretations of the Wilcox and Nock findings and argue that their data actually support the opposite conclusion. Springer (2007) highlights Wilcox and Nock's finding that a husband's emotional engagement was the best predictor of a wife's marital happiness and argues that this supports the need for equality in marriages. Risman (2009) comments that the conclusions of Wilcox and Nock misrepresent the concept of "doing gender" as supporting traditional gender roles and do not consider the inequality that exists between men and women or the way this covertly influences women's expectations. This dialogue among researchers suggests that, not only are expectations important to consider when studying emotionally intimate processes, but that individuals' expectations

might also be influenced by gender ideologies. Returning to the interpersonal process model of intimacy, gender ideology might best be thought of as a part of the motives, needs, goals, and fears component that affects the interpretive filter component (see Figure 1). Again, this component consists of factors that motivate individuals toward intimacy. Very little research on the interpersonal process model of intimacy has accounted for the motives, needs, goals, and fears component and no study has looked at how this component might affect the interpretive filter component. Thus, the extant literature could benefit from research that elaborates on Marshall's findings by accounting for the influence of gender ideology on the interpretive filter. This is yet another goal of the current study. This research expands on Marshall's work by accounting for the effects of women's interpretive filter and exploring how gender ideology influences women's expectations of self-disclosure. This last expansion is an important objective because, from a social constructionist perspective, masculine gender ideology not only influences how men behave, it also influences what behavior women expect from men. Said differently, the level at which a woman expects her partner to self-disclose might be influenced a great deal by her own belief that men should or should not express their emotions. Thus, women's expectations, conceptualized as part of their interpretive filter, are likely influenced by their own endorsement of traditional masculine gender norms which in turn influences the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's experience of emotional intimacy.

Expanding our collective understanding of this process, the current study departs from Marshall's (2008) work in three important ways. First, this study focuses specifically on the contributions of self-disclosure to emotional intimacy. Although self-disclosure and partner responsiveness are both important components of the interpersonal process model of intimacy (Reis & Shaver, 1988), the scope of this study is to expand on Marshall's findings related to self-

disclosure and gender-role traditionalism. For this reason, this study does not measure partner responsiveness, but rather centers on the association of self-disclosure and emotional intimacy. Second, rather than use a general measure of gender-role traditionalism like Marshall did, this study examines the effects of masculine gender ideology in particular. This is because the disclosure of emotions is consistent with femininity but contradictory to masculinity making masculine gender ideology a strong counterforce affecting intimate interactions. Thus, emotional expression in interpersonal relationships may vary to a greater extent on the influence of traditional masculine gender ideology than it does on traditional feminine gender ideology. Measuring gender-role traditionalism in a general way might muddy its effect on emotional intimacy. Finally, this work differs from earlier research in that it measures expectations in order to account for the interpretive filter of the listening partner and masculine gender ideology to account for the motives, needs, goals, and fears component. These efforts are meant to address these commonly overlooked components of the interpersonal process model of intimacy. In line with these objectives, the following section includes specific hypotheses tested in this study.

Study Hypothesis

The purpose of this study was to overlay an understanding of gender as a social construction on the experience of emotional intimacy in heterosexual couples and expand on the current finding that men's traditionalism, and subsequently their lower levels of self-disclosure, affects their partner's levels of emotional intimacy. By doing this, the current study also addressed important gaps in the literature related to the perceptual components of the interpersonal process model of intimacy (Reis and Shaver, 1988). The first objective of this study was to retest the effect found by Marshall (2008) in order to establish the influence of men's masculine gender ideology on self-disclosure and emotional intimacy. The second goal of this

study was to examine whether women's expectations of their partner's self-disclosure moderated the relationship between their partner's levels of self-disclosure and their own experiences of emotional intimacy. Relating this to the conceptual model, this test meant to establish the importance of the interpretive filter for the association of men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy. Finally, this study examined whether women's own endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology was related to their expectations of their partner's self-disclosure. Specifically, this was a test of whether the motives, needs, goals, and fears component was associated with the interpretive filter component for women. The following were theoretically derived hypotheses for this study:

1) Consistent with Marshall's work, men's self-disclosure would mediate the relationship between their own endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology and their partner's experiences of emotional intimacy (Figure 2, paths 2c, 2d, & 2e)
2) Women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology would be a significant predictor of their expectations of their partner's self-disclosure (Figure 2, path 2a)
3) Women's expectations of partner self-disclosure would moderate the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's experiences of emotional intimacy (Figure 2, path 2b)

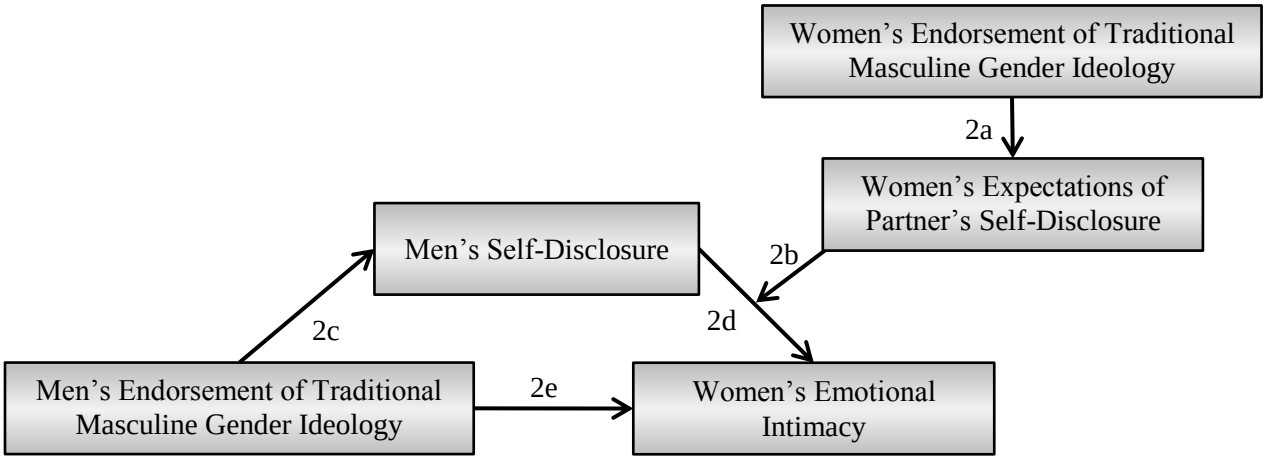

Figure 2. Conceptual model of proposed hypotheses.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

One of the overall goals of this study was to test whether women's expectations of their partner's self-disclosure moderates the relationship between their partner's self-disclosure and their own experience of emotional intimacy, but no measure of expectations related to partner self-disclosure previously existed. In order to test the proposed hypothesis, it was necessary to first develop and then validate a measure of expectations using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis procedures. The developed measure was then used to test the study hypothesis described at the end of the previous chapter. All of the data were collected simultaneously with different subsamples used for each analysis. In the interest of clarity, the following chapter is organized so that the general procedures used to collect the data are presented first, followed by a description of the multiple phases of analysis done to 1) develop and validate the measure of Expectation of Partner Self-Disclosure (EPSD) and 2) use this validated measure to test the proposed hypotheses.

Participants

Participants were recruited for this study using a purposive snowball sampling method (Robson, 1993). Individuals were contacted through multiple online avenues and asked to recruit their partner for the study. Each online avenue was selected to maximize the potential for variability in the couple's gender traditionalism. As an example, email invitations were forwarded to organizations like the Peace Keepers, a Christian men's group on Facebook, and members of the military to recruit couples with more traditional views of gender roles. To access couples with more progressive views of gender roles, invitations were sent to organizations like the National Council for Family Relations (NCFR) and the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). In addition to these targeted recruitment efforts, advertisements

were posted on Craigslist in 125 cities, with at least one posting in each state. To be eligible for the study, participants had to be in a committed heterosexual relationship for at least one continuous year. Couples with completed questionnaires from both partners were entered in a raffle for one of three $50 gift cards to Best Buy.

Procedure

Participants in this study completed an online survey that included four separate measures as well as demographic information like the presence of children and the length of relationship. Measures included in the survey consisted of the Restrictive Emotionality subscale of the Male Role Norm Inventory-Revised (MRNI-R; Levant et al., 2010), the Emotional Intimacy subscale of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships inventory (PAIR; Schaefer & Olson, 1981), the Relationship subscale of the Marital Self-Disclosure Questionnaire (MSDQ; Waring, Holden, & Wesley, 1998), and the Expectation of Partner Self-Disclosure scale created for this study.

Measures

Restrictive Emotionality Subscale of the Male Role Norm Inventory-Revised (MRNI-R).

Beliefs about emotional expression were measured using the 12-item Restrictive Emotionality subscale of the Male Role Norm Inventory-Revised (MRNI-R; Levant et al., 2010). The MRNI-R was created by Levant, Smalley et al., (2007) as a tool for measuring the internalization of traditional and non-traditional beliefs about masculinity. Agreement with these items is measured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), with possible subscale scores ranging from 12 to 84 with higher scores indicating a stronger endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology. Support for both the factor structure and the convergent validity of this measure was found by Levant and colleagues

(2010). Moreover, this scale has been repeatedly used to examine diverse groups of men. These include studies on men from different racial minority groups (Levant, Majors, & Michelle, 1998; Levant, Richmond et al., 2007; Liu, 2002), transgender and gay men (Campbell, 2000; Fran, 2010), men at different ages (Levant, Graef, Smalley, Williams, & McMillan, 2008) and men from varying nationalities (Levant, Cuthbert et al., 2003). Sample items include "A man should never admit when others hurt his feelings," "I might find it a little silly or embarrassing if a male friend of mine cried over a sad love story," and "Men should not be too quick to tell others that they care about them" (Levant et al., 2010; p. 32). Subscale reliabilities for the current study were excellent showing a Chonbach's alpha of .90 for men and Chonbach's alpha of .89 for women.

Emotional Intimacy Subscale of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) inventory. Participants' experience of emotional intimacy within their partnerships was measured using the 6-item Emotional Intimacy subscale of the PAIR (Schaefer & Olson, 1981). Items are measured on a 5 point Likert-type scale with response options ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." Possible scores range from 6 to 30 with higher scores indicating greater levels of emotional intimacy. Sample items include "My partner listens to me when I need someone to talk to," "I can state my feelings without him or her getting defensive," and "I often feel distant from my partner." The PAIR has repeatedly been used by researchers and clinicians alike to assess the level of emotional intimacy within couple relationships (Denton et al., 2000; Durana, 1997). In previous studies, the reliability of the Emotional Intimacy subscale has been shown as an alpha of .82 for men and .83 for women (Mitchell et al., 2008). This study found a high level of reliability with a Chonbach's alpha of .88 for men and .87 for women.

Relationship Subscale of the Marital Self-Disclosure Questionnaire (MSDQ). In order to measure self-disclosure, participants responded to the 10-item Relationship subscale of the Marital Self-Disclosure Questionnaire (MSDQ; Waring et al., 1998). The MSDQ was created by Waring and colleagues to measure self-disclosure within marital relationships. Two modifications were made to this subscale for this study. First, the wording of items was changed to be more inclusive, substituting "spouse" with "partner." Second, items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale rather than the true false response option of the original scale. This change was made so that the structure of this measure was consistent with the other measures included in this study. Scores on this measure ranged from 10 to 50 with higher scores reflecting lower levels of self-disclosure. Example items include "I rarely disclose my need for closeness to my partner," "I rarely discuss aspects of our relationship that I would like to change," and "I let my partner know my real feelings." Reliability tests of this measure for the current study showed a Chonbach's alpha level of .87 for males and .91 for females.

Expectation of Partner Self-Disclosure (EPSD) scale. Because no measure existed for assessing individuals' expectations of their partner's self-disclosure, the Expectation of Partner Self-Disclosure (EPSD) scale was created for this study. The 10-items included in this measure were modified from the MSDQ Relationship subscale (Waring et al., 1998) to assess the degree to which participants' expectations of self-disclosure were being met by their partner. Questions were divided among three subscales that asked participants about their expectations regarding their partner's self-disclosure of vulnerable information not related to their current relationship (Vulnerable General), vulnerable self-disclosures related to their current relationship (Vulnerable Relationship) and the self-disclosure of issues not considered vulnerable (Superficial). Sample items include "Your partner's willingness to talk about those things that have hurt her deeply

is...” and “Your partner's willingness to talk about the feelings she has for you is...” Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Much less than I expect” to “Much more than I expect” with possible scores ranging from 5 to 50 and higher scores indicating that a participant’s expectations of self-disclosure were exceeded by his or her partner. A list of these initial items can be found in Table 1. Reliability tests for this measure confirmed the high reliability of the scale showing a Chonbach’s alpha level of .89 for men and .86 for women in the current study. Finally, an in-depth discussion of the results from the exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis used to develop this measure can be found in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Of the 1,172 individuals who read the introduction page of this survey, 667 people responded resulting in a 57.0% response rate. Two hundred and forty six of these participants included their unique code which allowed their responses to be matched with their partner's responses, resulting in complete data from 123 couples. Participants whose partners did not respond to the survey (n = 421) were randomly assigned to one of two subgroups and were used to conduct either an exploratory factor analysis or a confirmatory factor analysis of the Expectation of Partner Self-Disclosure (EPSD). In the following results section, findings from the exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses are presented first followed by the results of the hypothesis tests.

Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analyses of the EPSD

Participants randomly assigned to the exploratory factor analysis group (n = 200) were not statistically different than the participants assigned to the confirmatory factor analysis group (n = 221) on any of the demographic variables examined in this study. These included the age of participants (t = .24, p = .81), their race/ethnicity (χ^2= 7.99, df = 7; p = .33), their education level χ^2= 5.32, df = 8; p = .72), the length of their relationship (t = 1.54, p = .12), the presence of children χ^2= 3.06, df = 1; p = .06), the region of the country they lived in χ^2= 0.52, df = 3; p = .91), their relationship status χ^2= 4.51, df = 3; p = .21), whether they lived together χ^2= 0.05, df = 1; p = .83), and if they had previously been married χ^2= 0.01, df = 1; p = .93).

Exploratory Factor Analysis

A missing values analysis (MVA) in SPSS 21(Graham, 2012) showed 1.7% missing values in this dataset. To handle this missing data, the expectation maximization (EM) algorithm

in NORM 2.03 was used to impute a single dataset with no missing values. This dataset can be used for data quality analysis like EFA because it does not rely on standard errors (Graham, 2012). During the imputation, the EM converged normally in 340 iterations and the diagnostic plots appeared normal for all parameters. Preliminary analysis confirmed the factorability of this dataset (KMO = .92) and both the Kasier-Guttman rule of eigenvalues larger than one and the scree plot test suggested a factor structure between two and three factors (Pett, Lackey, & Sullivan, 2003). Since these preliminary tests were somewhat inconclusive, a Parallel Analysis (PA) and a Velicer's MAP test were conducted using O'Conner's (2000) syntax. Parallel analysis uses a randomly generated dataset to determine the number of eigenvalues from the factor analysis that are larger than the eigenvalues of the random dataset. A plot of the parallel analysis for this EFA suggested four factors be retained (Figure 3). A Velicer's MAP test conducts a principal components analysis that systematically increases the number of components while looking at the proportion of unsystematic versus systematic variance in the correlation matrix. The output of a Velicer's MAP test indicates the step, or rather the number of components, when there exists more unsystematic variance in the correlation matrix than there is systematic variance. Results from the Velicer's MAP test done for this EFA suggested three components be retained. Together these tests suggested between three and four factors, and since a three factor structure made more conceptual sense than a four factor structure, three factors were retained.

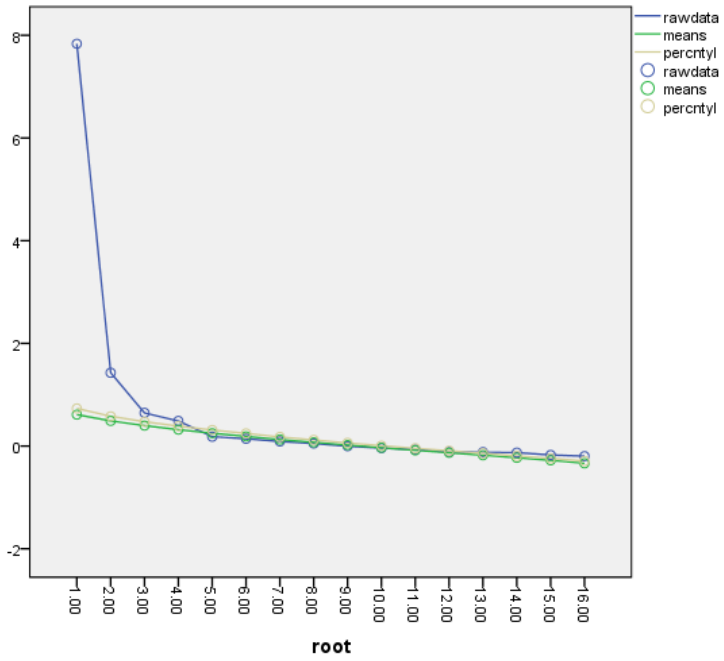

*Figure 3.*Plot of Parallel Analysis Including Rawdata Eigenvalues and Mean Random Data Eigenvalues.

As was believed to be the case for this study, Pett, Lackey and Sullivan (2003) suggest using an oblique rotation like direct oblimin when the factors of a measure are correlated. Extracting three factors using principle axis factoring (PAF) with oblique (direct oblimin) rotation showed that the three factors accounted for 62.1% of the variance in participant scores. Based on Worthington and Whittaker's (2006) recommendations to omit items loading less than .32 and that crossload less than a .15 difference in magnitude from the highest factor loading, fourteen of the sixteen items were retained (Table 2). These fourteen items were then organized into three subscales, with the Vulnerable General factor having four items (α = .89), the Superficial factor having six items (α = .85), and the Vulnerable Relationship factor having four items (α =.90). A test of the internal consistency of the entire scale also showed high reliability (α = .92). Items in the Vulnerable General subscale together measure expectations related to their partners' self-disclosure of vulnerable information that is not related to their current relationship.

This includes, for example, the self-disclosure of times in the past where he or she felt ashamed or embarrassed and things that have hurt him or her deeply. Items in the Vulnerable Relationship subscale consisted of vulnerable self-disclosures related to their current relationship like his or her need for closeness and companionship and positive feelings related to the relationship. The Superficial subscale included items that assessed their expectations of their partner's self-disclosure of spiritual or religious beliefs and general things related to managing a family like parenting. Together these items measured the self-disclosure of issues not considered vulnerable.

Table 1

Participant Demographics for the Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Demographic Variable	EFA *(n=200)*		CFA *(n=221)*	
	Frequency (%)	*M (SD)*	Frequency (%)	*M (SD)*
Age		33.2 (11.7)		32.8 (11.0)
Gender				
Female	155 (77.5)		180 (81.4)	
Male	45 (22.5)		41 (18.6)	
Race/ethnicity				
Caucasian/European-American	140 (70.0)		160 (72.4)	
Latino(a)/Chicano(a)/Hispanic	16 (8.0)		15 (6.8)	
African American/Black	8 (4.0)		11 (5.0)	
Native American/Alaskan	5 (2.5)		1 (0.5)	
Biracial/multiethnic	9 (4.5)		5 (2.3)	
Asian/Asian American	2 (1.0)		7 (3.2)	
Pacific Islander	4 (2.0)		3 (1.4)	
Other	1 (0.5)		2 (0.9)	
Relationship Status				
Married/ living together	101 (50.5)		97 (43.9)	
Not married/ living together	44 (22.0)		56 (25.3)	
Not married/ not living together	28 (14.0)		30 (13.6)	
Married/not living together	2 (1.0)		4 (1.8)	
Separated/not living together	1 (0.5)		0 (0.0)	
Children				
No	100 (50.0)		129 (58.4)	
Yes	86 (43.0)		75 (33.9)	
Education				
Grades 1-8	2 (1.0)		0 (0.0)	
High school (9-12, no degree)	3 (1.5)		3 (1.4)	
High school grad (or GED)	22 (11.0)		21 (9.5)	
Some college (no degree)	57 (28.5)		58 (26.2)	
Associate degree	21 (10.5)		17 (7.7)	
Bachelor's degree	35 (17.5)		49 (22.2)	
Master's degree	28 (14.0)		31 (14.0)	
Professional school degree	1 (0.5)		1 (0.5)	
Doctorate degree	17 (8.5)		24 (10.9)	
Region in US				
West	48 (24.0)		59 (26.7)	
Midwest	44 (22.0)		46 (20.8)	
South	47 (23.5)		54 (24.4)	
Northeast	42 (21.0)		43 (19.5)	
Relationship length		9.60 (11.7)		7.96 (8.0)

Note. Percentages do not add up to 100% because of missing data.

Table 2

Factor Loadings of Exploratory Factor Analysis with Direct Oblimin Rotation of EPSD

Scale Item	VG	S	VR	*M (SD)*
EPSD 3 - Felt ashamed embarrassed	**.91**	-.04	.01	2.8 (1.0)
EPSD 4 - Hurt him/her deeply	**.87**	-.05	-.02	2.8 (1.1)
EPSD 7 - Past sad experiences	**.62**	.13	-.12	2.9 (1.1)
EPSD 8 - His /her shortcomings	**.55**	.27	-.06	3.0 (1.1)
EPSD 5 - Private feelings, in general	.45	.20	-.30	2.8 (1.1)
EPSD 9 - Private thoughts, in general	.41	.19	-.31	2.8 (1.1)
EPSD 14 - Personal interests/ hobbies	-.01	**.75**	.02	3.1 (0.9)
EPSD 11- Politics/current events	.03	**.70**	.12	3.1 (0.9)
EPSD 16 - Everyday things	-.04	**.70**	-.12	3.1 (1.0)
EPSD 13 - Managing a family	-.04	**.69**	-.10	3.0 (0.9)
EPSD 12 - Managing a household	-.03	**.69**	-.08	3.0 (1.0)
EPSD 15 - Spiritual or religious beliefs	.18	**.57**	.02	2.9 (1.0)
EPSD 10 - Feelings s/he has for you	-.10	.08	**-.92**	3.2 (1.2)
EPSD 1 - Positive feelings re relationship	.01	.02	**-.87**	3.0 (1.2)
EPSD 6 - Need closeness/companionship	.24	-.06	**-.66**	2.9 (1.2)
EPSD 2 - Concerns about relationship	.26	.02	**-.56**	2.9 (1.1)

Note. Factor loadings > .32, cross loading < .15 in magnitude are in boldface (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). VG = Vulnerable General; S = Superficial; VR = Vulnerable Relationship.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Two hundred and twenty one participants were used for a confirmatory factor analysis that tested the three factor structure of the Expectation of Partner Self-Disclosure (EPSD) measure proposed in the exploratory factor analysis. Of the 221 participants included in this analysis, 189 provided complete demographic data. Participants' mean age was 32.8 (SD = 11.0) years and their average relationship length was 8.0 (SD = 8.0) years. See Table 1 for additional participant demographics. For the data used in the confirmatory factor analysis, a missing values analysis (MVA) indicated 0.8% missing values. Following Brown's (2006) recommendations for addressing missing data when doing a confirmatory factor analysis in AMOS, the Full Information Maximum Likelihood (FIML) option was selected. To specify the model, the loading of the Shortcomings indicator, the Everyday Things indicator and the Need for Closeness/Companionship indicator were each fixed to 1, the error paths were set to 1, and the

factor variances, the error variances, and the covariance between factors were freely estimated. In order to assess model fit, the chi-square index (χ^2) was used alongside the root mean square error of approximation index (RMSEA, Steiger & Lind, 1980 as cited in Steiger, 1990), the comparative fit index (CFI, Bentler, 1990), and the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI, Tucker & Lewis, 1973).The χ^2index is an absolute fit index that compares the hypothesized model with no model at all. Although commonly used by researchers, it is considered unreliable on its own since it is subject to both large sample sizes (N > 200) and non-normal data, For this reason, Brown suggests that researchers use at least two indices in addition to the χ^2, and that these additional indices come from different index classification since each fit indices provides unique information and has different limitations. The RMSEA is considered part of the parsimony fit class and tests whether the hypothesized model fits reasonably well within the population of interest. Criteria for a good fitting model using the RMSEA index requires a value $\leq$ .06 and a confidence interval with lower bounds $\leq$ .05 and upper bounds not exceeding .10. Both the CFI and the TLI are considered comparative fit indices that compare the hypothesized model to a null baseline model with criteria for a good fitting model for both being $\geq$ .95. With these criteria in mind, the three factor model with the fourteen items retained during the exploratory factor analysis, showed poor overall model fit (χ^2 =266.41, df =74; p < .000; RMSEA =.11 CI [.095-.123]; CFI =.88, TLI =.83). To improve model fit, a dataset with no missing values was created using the EM algorithm of AMOS 20 to impute missing values following the recommendations of Harrington (2009). This imputed dataset was then used to run a second test of model fit in order to generate modification indices. Using these modifications indices as a guide, the conceptual fit of each item was considered resulting in the deletion of items 10, 12, 13 and 15 from the model. Specifically, items 10 and 15 seemed to replicate concepts in items 1 and

11 respectively, while items 12 and 13 were too similarly worded. After removing the items, the model was then tested using the non-imputed dataset which resulted in a significant improvement of the overall model fit and all fit indices, indicating a good-fitting model (χ^2 = 55.87, df = 32; p < .006; RMSEA = .06 CI [.031-.083], CFI = .98, TLI=.96). Standardized coefficients of the retained items can be found in Table 3. For the final model, tests of reliability showed high internal consistency for the entire scale (α = .89) and all of the subscales.

Table 3

Standardized Coefficients of Confirmatory Factor Analysis with Three Factors of EPSD

Scale Item	Coefficient	*M*	*SD*	α
Vulnerable General				.85
EPSD 3 - Felt ashamed embarrassed	.84	2.9	1.0	
EPSD 4 - Hurt him/her deeply	.86	2.9	1.0	
EPSD 7 - Past sad experiences	.71	3.0	1.0	
EPSD 8 - His /her shortcomings	.69	2.9	1.0	
Vulnerable Relationship				.84
EPSD 1 - Positive feelings re relationship	.82	3.1	1.2	
EPSD 2 - Concerns about relationship	.79	3.0	1.1	
EPSD 6 - Need closeness/companionship	.78	3.1	1.1	
Superficial				.75
EPSD 11 - Politics/current events	.53	3.2	1.0	
EPSD 14 - Personal interests/ hobbies	.82	3.2	0.9	
EPSD 16 - Everyday things	.79	3.2	0.9	

Note. Items 10, 12, 13, 15 were deleted to improve model fit.

Phase Two Hypothesis Tests

The focus of this analysis was twofold, first to confirm the mediation effect found by Marshall (2008) that men's self-disclosure mediated the relationship between men's endorsement of traditional masculinity and women's reported emotional intimacy, and second to examine whether women's expectations of their partner's self-disclosure moderated the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy. To test these hypotheses, the PROCESS macro created by Hayes (2013) was used to test for mediation using bootstrap

methods to estimate the significance of indirect effects. This was followed by a hierarchical multiple regression procedure for testing moderation in SPSS 21.

Participants included in the hypothesis test consisted of partners in the 123 couples who provided mostly complete and matched responses. Of these couples, 119 had complete demographic data for both partners. Although the length of participants' relationships varied, all of the participants met the minimum criteria of being in their relationship for at least one continuous year. A complete breakdown of participant demographics is included in Table 4.

Table 4.

Participant Demographics for Couples in Phase Two Hypothesis Tests

Demographic Variable	Male *(n=123)*		Female *(n=123)*	
	Frequency (%)	*M (SD)*	Frequency (%)	*M (SD)*
Individual level variables				
Age		32.2 (10.0)		30.5 (9.8)
Race/ethnicity				
Caucasian/European-American	93 (75.6)		102 (82.9)	
Latino(a)/Chicano(a)/Hispanic	8 (6.5)		7 (5.7)	
African American/Black	8 (6.5)		1 (0.8)	
Native American/Alaskan	2 (1.6)		1 (0.8)	
Biracial/multiethnic	4 (3.3)		6 (4.9)	
Asian/Asian American	4 (3.3)		4 (3.3)	
Pacific Islander	0 (0.0)		1 (0.8)	
Other	0 (0.0)		1 (0.8)	
Education				
Grades 1-8	0 (0.0)		0 (0.0)	
High school (9-12, no degree)	3 (2.4)		1 (0.8)	
High school graduate (or GED)	16 (13.0)		7 (5.7)	
Some college (no degree)	24 (19.5)		27 (22.0)	
Associate degree	7 (5.7)		9 (7.3)	
Bachelor's degree	36 (29.3)		38 (30.9)	
Master's degree	22 (17.9)		30 (24.4)	
Professional school degree	3 (2.4)		2 (1.6)	
Doctorate degree	10 (8.1)		9 (7.3)	
Region in US				
West	27 (22.0)		26 (21.1)	
Midwest	29 (23.6)		28 (22.8)	
South	34 (27.6)		36 (29.3)	
Northeast	32 (26.0)		32 (26.0)	
Couple level variables (n=123)				
Relationship Status				
Married /living together		70 (56.9)		
Not married/ living together		30 (24.4)		
Not married/ not living together		22 (17.9)		
Married/ not living together		0 (0.0)		
Separated/not living together		1 (0.8)		
Children				
No		77 (62.6)		
Yes		46 (37.4)		
Relationship length (yrs.)		7.4 (7.8)		

Note. Percentages do not add up to 100% because of missing variables. Region in US was coded at the individual level because some couples lived separately at a distance.

Missing Data

An MVA of this subsample showed that 0.47% of values were missing. To handle this missing data, multiple imputation was done using NORM 2.03 to create ten imputed datasets following the recommendations of Graham (2012). During the imputation, the EM converged normally in 14 iterations and the diagnostic plots appeared normal for all parameters. Tests for mediation and moderation were then conducted using each of the ten imputed datasets and the estimates, standard errors, and confidence intervals were pooled according to Rubin's (1987) rules for MI inference.

Preliminary Analysis

Based on the recommendations of Baron and Kenny (1986), both descriptive statistics and Pearson's r bivariate correlations were calculated for the data before conducting the mediation and moderation analyses. This initial examination of the data was important to ensure that the variables were significantly related to each other, that there were no outliers in the data and, subsequently, that it was appropriate to continue with the tests for mediation and moderation. Descriptives were calculated for continuous variables including means and standard deviations, while nominal variables were compiled into frequencies and percentages. For demographic variables like age, race/ethnicity, education, and region in the US, frequencies were calculated at the individual level. For variables like relationship status and number of children, frequencies were totaled at the couple level. In situations where discrepancies existed between the partners of a couple on a couple level variable, the couple was coded according to the partner who provided the most information regarding that variable. Finally, a scale score for each partner was calculated on every measure by averaging that individual's responses to a measure's items. These scale scores were then used to calculate the correlations among measures.

In general male partners averaged lower levels of self-disclosure ($t = 3.66$, $p < .000$) and endorse traditional masculine gender ideology at a greater rate than female partners ($t = 6.56$, $p < .000$), but did not have significantly different levels of emotional intimacy ($t = .16$, $p = .88$) or expectations related to self-disclosure ($t = .63$, $p = .53$) than did the female partners of this study. Tests of Pearson's r bivariate correlations showed significant correlations among the variables of interest for both male and female partners. Especially important for this preliminary analysis, was establishing that significant relationships existed between men's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology, their own self-disclosure and their partner's emotional intimacy as well as between women's expectations of their partner's self-disclosure and their own experiences of emotional intimacy. Each of these relationships showed significant correlations, allowing for more sophisticated analytic tests. Complete results of these preliminary analyses can be found in Table 5.

Table 5.

Descriptives and Bivariate Pearson R Correlations among Variables

Scale Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	*M (SD)*
1. Men SD	-							2.2 (0.7)
2. Women SD	.19*	-						1.9 (0.7)
3. Men EI	-.49**	-.57**	-					3.9 (0.8)
4. Women EI	-.43**	-.46**	.58**	-				3.9 (0.8)
5. Men Expectation	.03	-.39**	.43**	.04	-			3.1 (0.6)
6. Women Expectation	-.37**	-.27**	.30**	.44**	.08	-		3.0 (0.6)
7. Men Masculinity	.27**	.11	-.18	-.40**	.19*	-.22*	-	2.8 (1.2)
8 Women Masculinity	.25**	.30**	-.19*	-.21*	.07	-.13	.48**	2.0 (0.9)

Note. Men SD = Men's Self-Disclosure; Women SD = Women's Self-Disclosure; Men EI = Men's Emotional Intimacy; Women EI = Women's Emotional Intimacy; Men Expectation = Men's Expectation of their Partners' Self-Disclosure; Women Expectation = Women's Expectation of their Partners' Self-Disclosure; Men Masculinity = Men's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology; Women Masculinity = Women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology.

Note. Higher scores on the Men SD variable reflect lower levels of self-disclosure.

* p < .05. ** p < .01.

Test of Hypothesis One

Hypothesis one stated that men's self-disclosure would mediate the relationship between men's endorsement of traditional gender ideology and women's experiences of emotional intimacy. To test the proposed mediation effect, the procedure detailed in Hayes (2013) was used to estimate both the indirect effect of the mediator and the significance of this indirect effect. This procedure uses the PROCESS macro created for SPSS which implements the bootstrap method for estimating the indirect effect of a mediator, the standard error term and a 95% confidence interval. According to Hayes (2009), bootstrapping indirect effects and using the bias-corrected and accelerated confidence interval (BCa CI) to determine significance is the preferred test for mediation because it makes no assumptions about the shape of the sampling distribution and, therefore, it is not subject to the decrease in power associated with asymmetries and other forms of non-normality within sampling distributions. Because of the robust nature of this method, it benefits from the highest power and the best management of Type I error, making it a sound option for testing mediation. Using the PROCESS macro in SPSS 21 (Hayes, 2013), women's PAIR was entered as the dependent variable, with men's MRNI-R entered as the independent variable and men's MSDQ entered as the mediator. It is important to note that for the MSDQ variable, higher scores reflect lower levels of self-disclosure. Results from the test for mediation showed a significant indirect effect of men's endorsement of traditional masculinity on women's emotional intimacy through men's self-disclosure, b = -.06, 95% BCa CI [-.11, -.01], with a medium effect size, k^2 = .10, 95% BCa CI [.05, .15] (Preacher & Kelley, 2011). These findings are consistent with the findings of Marshall (2008) and support hypothesis 1 that men's self-disclosure mediates the relationship between their own endorsement of traditional

masculine gender ideology and their partners' experiences of emotional intimacy. See Figure 3 for the full statistical model.

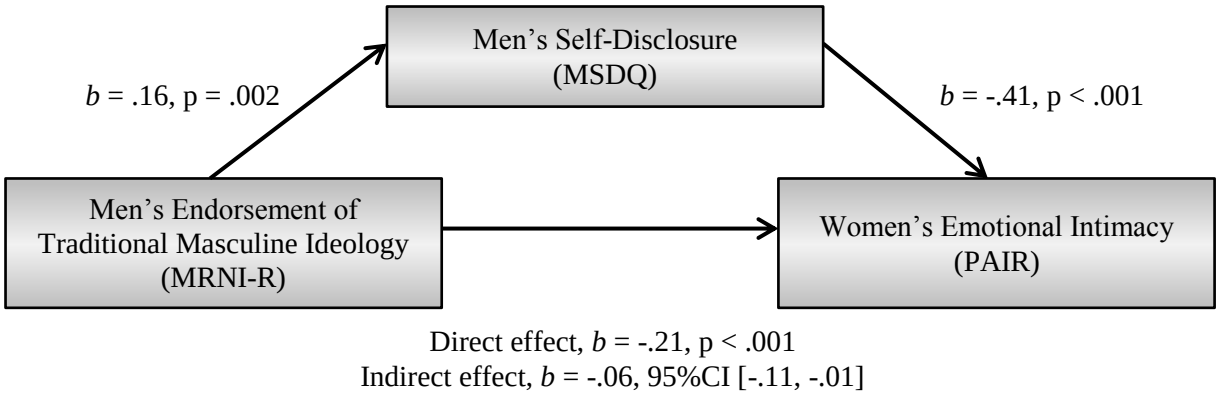

Figure 4. Statistical model of men's endorsement of traditional masculinity as a predictor of women's emotional intimacy, mediated by men's self-disclosure.

Note. Higher scores on the men's self-disclosure variable (MSDQ) reflect lower levels of self-disclosure.

Test of Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis two stated that women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology would significantly predict women's expectations of partner self-disclosure. Contrary to hypothesis 2, results showed that women's endorsement of traditional masculine ideology was not significantly related to women's expectations of their partners self-disclosure, r (121) = -.13, p = .15.

Test of Hypothesis Three

A test of the final hypothesis examined whether women's expectations of their partner's self-disclosure moderated the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy by using hierarchical multiple regression procedures. For interactions, the use of hierarchical multiple regression is the preferred analysis when both the predictor variable and the

moderator variable are continuous (Frazier, Tix & Barron, 2004). To start, each of the continuous variables included in the interaction were centered and a product term was formed by multiplying the centered men's self-disclosure variable and the centered women's expectations of partner self-disclosure variable. Following Frazier and colleagues' (2004) steps, relationship variables like relationship status, whether the couple lived together, whether they had children and the length of their relationship were entered as control variables into the first block, followed by the centered predictor variables into the second block. Finally, the interaction term was entered into the third block of the regression. In accordance with Frazier and colleagues' suggestions, the presence of moderation was determined by looking at the significance of the change in R^2 between model two and model three of the regression. Results from block one showed that the variance accounted for by the control variables was .15 (adjusted R^2 = .10) and this was significantly different from zero, F (6,116) = 3.31, p = .01. Of these control variables, the length of the participant relationships (β = -.04, p < .00) and whether the couple lived together (β = -.48, p = .03) were all significant predictors of women's experience of emotional intimacy. After entering the centered predictor variables into block two, there was a .21 change in variance which was significantly different from zero, F (2,114) = 19.18, p < .00. Finally, the change in variance after entering block three was .00, and this was not statistically different from zero, F (1,113) = 0. 40, p = .53. Taken together, these results show that, contrary to hypothesis 3, there was no moderation effect supported by the data. Regression coefficients can be found in Table 6 and a plot of the simple slopes can be seen in Figure 4.

Table 6.

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Testing Women's Expectation of Partner Self-Disclosure as a Moderator of the Relationship between Men's Self-Disclosure and Women's Emotional Intimacy

Predictor	ΔR^2	ΔF	*Sig* ΔF	*B*	*SE (B)*
Block 1	.15	3.31	.01		
Control Variables					
(constant)				4.12**	.18
Length of relationship				-.04**	.01
Have children				.06	.16
Live together				-.48*	.22
Previously married				-.45	.32
Committed, not married				.50	1.22
Committed, married				1.26	1.23
Block 2	.21	19.18	.00		
Control and Predictor Variables					
(constant)				3.96**	.16
Length of relationship				-.03**	.01
Have children				.07	.14
Live together				-.16	.20
Previously married				-.49	.28
Committed, not married				-.31	1.10
Committed, married				.22	1.12
Men's self-disclosure				-.33**	.10
Women's expectations of self-disclosure				.42**	.12
Block 3	.00	0.40	.53		
Control, Predictor, & Interaction Variables					
(constant)				3.98**	.16
Length of relationship				-.03**	.01
Have children				.09	.15
Live together				-.17	.20
Previously married				-.51	.28
Committed, not married				-.25	1.12
Committed, married				.29	1.12
Men's self-disclosure				-.33**	.20
Women's expectations of self-disclosure				.44**	.12
Women's expectations of self-disclosure X Men's self-disclosure				.09	.14

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

Note. Higher scores on the men's self-disclosure variable reflect lower levels of self-disclosure.

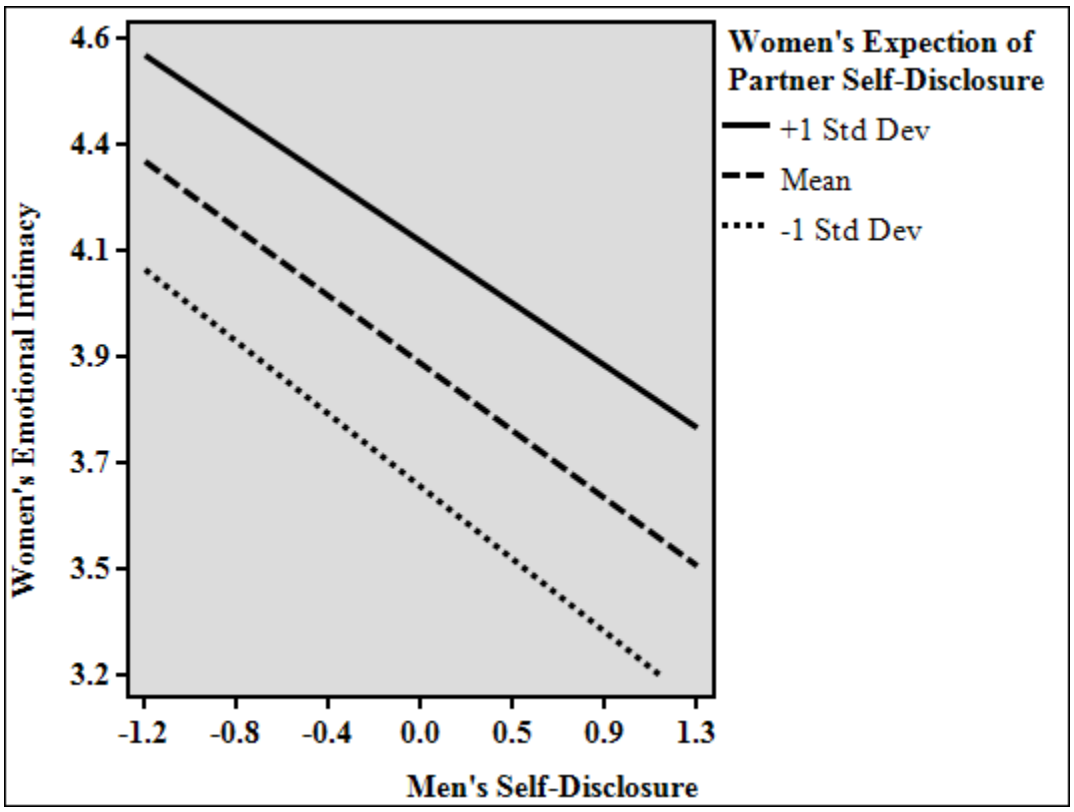

Figure 5. Plot of simple slopes for women's expectation of partner self-disclosure as a moderator of the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy.

Note. Higher scores on the men's self-disclosure variable reflect lower levels of self-disclosure.

Post-Hoc Analyses

Because hypothesis two and hypothesis three were not supported by the data, post-hoc analyses were done to test two alternate hypotheses. Again, hypothesis three proposed a moderation effect such that the strength of the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy was dependent on women's expectations of their partner's self-disclosure. Rethinking this hypothesis, it seemed plausible that women's expectations of their partner's self-disclosure might mediate the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy instead. That is, rather than change this relationship as would be indicative of moderation, the effect of men's self-disclosure on women's emotional intimacy

might happen by way of women's expectations. Conceptually, this post-hoc hypothesis seems more consistent with the interpretive filter in Reis and Shaver's (1988) model in that the effect of men's self-disclosure on women's emotional intimacy happens through women's perception of the self-disclosure rather than women's perceptions influencing the strength of the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy.

A second post-hoc hypothesis proposed for this data was that women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology would moderate the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy, since women's expectations of partner self-disclosure did not significantly moderate this relationship in the test of hypothesis three. The rational for this post-hoc hypothesis was that women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology would be more directly related to the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy than originally proposed. The non-significant finding for hypothesis three suggested that the effect of men's self-disclosure on women's emotional intimacy was equally strong for all women regardless of their level of expectation of partner self-disclosure. Also, results from hypothesis two showed that women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology was not related to their expectation of partner self-disclosure. Together these findings indicate that women's beliefs about masculine gender ideology may not directly translate into expectations regarding self-disclosure. Instead, the effect of women's gender traditionalism on the association of men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy might be more directly related with this association. Specifically, rather than representing the motives, needs, goals, and fears component, gender ideology might be better conceptualized as a direct moderator of the relationship between self-disclosure and emotional intimacy.

Post-Hoc Hypothesis One

To test the first post hoc hypothesis, Hayes' (2013) PROCESS macro, which uses a bootstrap method to estimate the significance of indirect affects, was again used to test for mediation. Women's emotional intimacy (PAIR) was entered as the dependent variable, men's self-disclosure (MSDQ) was entered as the independent variable and women's expectation of partner self-disclosure (EPSD) was entered as the mediating variable. It is important to note that higher scores on the MSDQ reflect lower levels of self-disclosure. Results from this analysis were significant and supported an indirect effect of men's self-disclosure on women's emotional intimacy through women's expectations of their partner's self-disclosure, b = -.14, 95% BCa CI [-.19, -.09] with a medium to large effect size, k^2 = .13, 95% BCa CI [.08, .18] (Preacher & Kelley, 2011). This significant finding supports post-hoc hypothesis one that women's expectations of their partner's self-disclosure mediates the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy. The full statistical model for this test can be found in Figure 5.

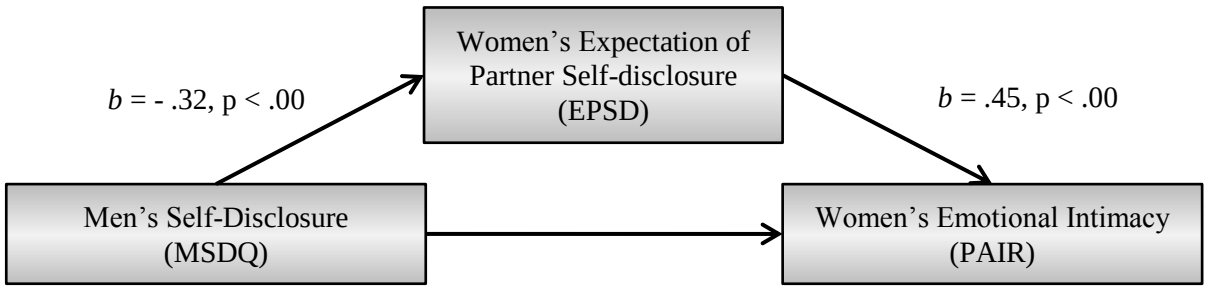

Figure 6. Statistical model of men's self-disclosure as a predictor of women's emotional intimacy, mediated by women's expectation of partner self-disclosure.

Note. Higher scores on the men's self-disclosure variable (MSDQ) reflect lower levels of self-disclosure.

Post-Hoc Hypothesis Two

A test of the second post-hoc hypothesis that women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology moderates the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy was done using a hierarchical multiple regression procedure similar to that used for testing hypothesis three. To being this analysis, relationship variables were entered into block one as control variables. Next, the two centered predictor variables used in the interaction term, men's self-disclosure and women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology, were entered into the second block. Finally, the interaction term men's self-disclosure by women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology was included in the third block. Results of this analysis showed that after entering the centered predictor variables in block two, there was a .15 change in variance which was significantly different from zero, $F(2,114) = 12.24$, $p < .00$. Having entered the interaction term in block three, however, the change in variance was only .01 and was not statistically different from zero, $F(1,113) = 1.60$, $p = .41$. Contrary to post-hoc hypothesis two, these results did not support a moderation effect. The findings of a simple slopes analysis, however, did suggest the presence of moderation. Looking at the plotted slopes in Figure 6, it appears that a moderation effect might exist, but that this sample does not provide sufficient power for detecting the interaction. Post-hoc power analysis of this interaction showed power of 0.67 supporting this suspicion. Given these inconclusive results, no conclusions were drawn regarding this test of moderation. See Table 7 for regression coefficients.

Table 7.

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Testing Women's Endorsement of Traditional Masculinity as a Moderator of the Relationship between Men's Self-Disclosure and Women's Emotional Intimacy

Predictor	ΔR^2	ΔF	*Sig* ΔF	*B*	*SE (B)*
Block 2	.15	12.24	.00		
Control and Predictor Variables					
(constant)				4.06**	.16
Length of relationship				-.04**	.01
Have children				.09	.15
Live together				-.26	.21
Previously married				-.40	.29
Committed, not married				.54	1.12
Committed, married				1.14	1.13
Men's self-disclosure				-.42**	.10
Women endorsement of masculinity				-.10	.08
Block 3	.01	1.60	.41		
Control, Predictor, & Interaction Variables					
(constant)				4.07**	.16
Length of relationship				-.04**	.01
Have children				.10	.15
Live together				-.25	.21
Previously married				-.43	.29
Committed, not married				.61	1.12
Committed, married				1.21	1.13
Men's self-disclosure				-.44**	.10
Women endorsement of masculinity				-.06	.09
Women endorsement of masculinity X Men's self-disclosure				-.14	.12

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

Note. Higher scores on the men's self-disclosure variable (MSDQ) reflect lower levels of self-disclosure.

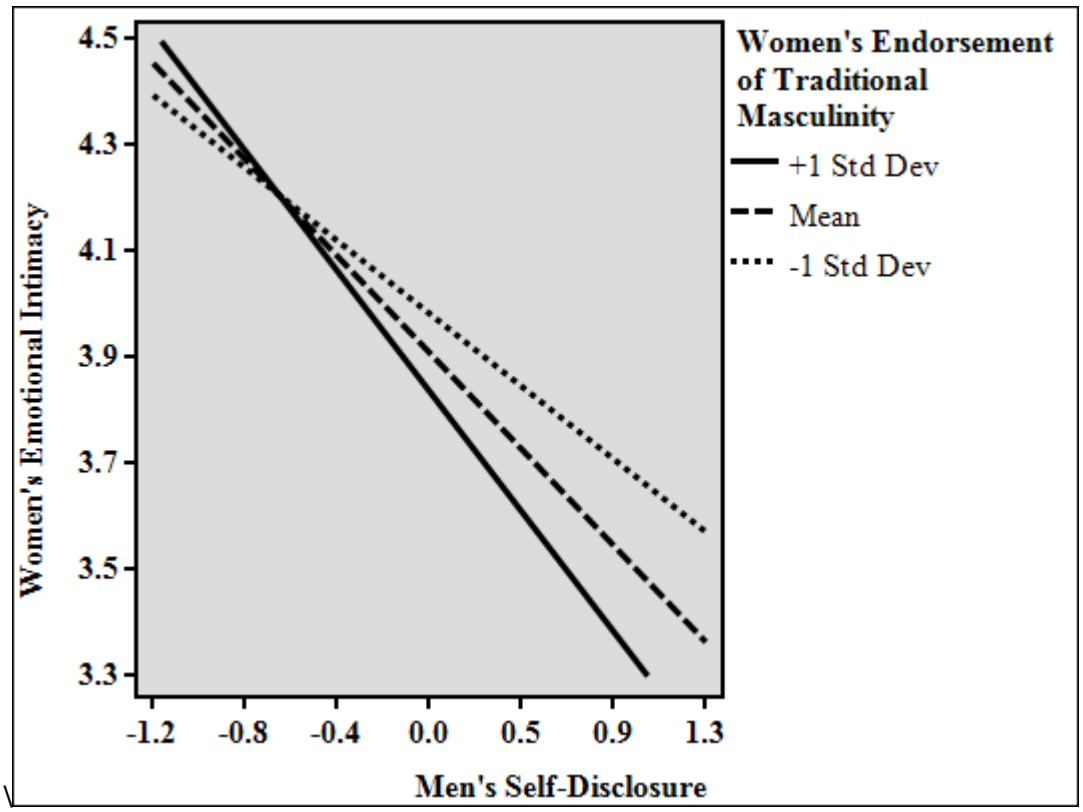

Figure 7. Plot of simple slopes for women's endorsement of traditional masculinity as a moderator of the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy. *Note.* Higher scores on the men's self-disclosure variable (MSDQ) reflect lower levels of self-disclosure.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The interpersonal process model of intimacy includes the interchange of self-disclosure and empathetic responding among partners and is considered an accurate depiction of emotionally intimate processes in heterosexual couples (Mitchell et al., 2008). While this model has been widely researched, previous authors have consistently overlooked the effects of gender socialization on the model, attributing the different experiences men and women have to innate characteristics rather than the influence of gender ideology. Only one study has looked specifically at the effects of gender-role traditionalism on emotional intimacy in heterosexual couples (Marshall, 2008). This study found that the effect of gender-role traditionalism on couples' emotional intimacy was mediated by partners' levels of self-disclosure. While this finding is an important contribution to the discourse on emotional intimacy, Marshall's study is among the majority of research on the interpersonal process model of intimacy that has overlooked the interpretive filter component of the original theoretical model. Thus, there is ample room for building on this work.

This study meant to address important oversights in the literature with regard to the interpersonal process model of intimacy (Reis & Shaver, 1988). By including measures of traditional masculine gender ideology and expectations of partner self-disclosure, this study disentangles the effects of gender socialization on couples' experiences of emotional intimacy while also accounting for the often overlooked interpretive filter. In sum, results from this investigation showed that gender socialization can be used to explain earlier findings that men and women experience the interpersonal process model of intimacy differently and also provided support for the interpretive filter component of the Reis and Shaver (1988) model.

Summary of Preliminary Analyses

Sample Composition

Although the sampling method used for this study prevented the achievement of a truly representative sample, the demographics of this sample were similar in terms of Race/ethnicity to the percentages found in the 2011 US Census QuickFacts report of the US population by Race/ethnicity (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). This sample was also similar in percentage to the 2011 US Census QuickFacts report of individuals living together and had nearly equal numbers of participants living in the four different census regions. Furthermore, nearly equal percentages of couples were married, not married, had children and did not have children, indicating diversity with regard to participants' relationship and childrearing status. The descriptive findings also showed sufficient variability among participants endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology. Participants in this study were more highly educated than what is reflected in the 2011 US Census, but given the use of academic listserves as a primary recruitment tool, this was to be expected and was a compromise made when developing the study.

Correlational Findings

A number of significant correlations were found among the different variables of interest. The most interesting of these findings were that men's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology was significantly related to their own self-disclosure, their own emotional intimacy, their partner's emotional intimacy, and their partner's expectation of self-disclosure. Together these correlational findings suggested that higher levels of traditional masculine gender ideology were associated with lower levels of self-disclosure, lower levels of emotional intimacy, lower levels of partner emotional intimacy, and having a partner who reported that their expectations for self-disclosure were not being met. While no causal conclusions can be

made from these correlations, these results are consistent with Marshall's (2008) findings regarding the association of men's gender traditionalism with lower levels of self-disclosure and lower levels of partner emotional intimacy.

Summary of Primary Analyses

Mediation Findings

An initial objective of this study was to replicate Marshall's (2008) finding that men's self-disclosure mediates the relationship between men's gender-role ideology and women's emotional intimacy. In line with this objective, hypothesis one stated that the effect of men's gender-role traditionalism on their partner's emotional intimacy would be significantly mediated by their levels of self-disclosure. This study found support for a mediation effect similar to Marshall's showing that the level of men's self-disclosure partially mediated the relationship between men's traditional masculine gender ideology and their partner's emotional intimacy. On a conceptual level, partial mediation means two things. First, it means that there was a direct relationship between men's traditional masculine gender ideology and their partner's emotional intimacy. Essentially, the partners of men who endorsed more traditional masculine gender ideology reported significantly lower levels of emotional intimacy. A partial mediation effect also means that there was an indirect relationship between men's masculine gender ideology and their partner's emotional intimacy that included the effect of men's lower levels of self-disclosure. The more men endorsed traditional masculine gender ideology, the more constrained their self-disclosure was and the lower their partner rated their feelings of emotional intimacy. Given the previous support for this finding and our theoretical understanding of traditional masculine gender ideology, this finding is not surprising. Since idealized masculinity requires men to restrict their emotional expression (Levant et al., 2009), but the self-disclosure of

emotions is an important contributor to emotional intimacy (Mitchell et al., 2008), it makes sense that the partners of more traditionally masculine men would experience lower levels of emotional intimacy by way of their partner's restricted self-disclosure.

Perceptual Components Findings

Building on Marshall's (2008) finding, this study accounted for the often overlooked interpretive filter and motives, needs, goals, and fears components of the Reis and Shaver's (1988) model. In line with this objective, hypothesis two proposed that women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology would significantly predict their own expectations of partner self-disclosure. On a conceptual level, this test determined whether the motives, needs, goals, and fears component predicted the interpretive filter component of the Reis and Shaver model. Hypothesis three stated that women's expectations of partner self-disclosure, conceptualized as the interpretive filter, would moderate the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy. Conceptually, this hypothesis tested whether the interpretive filter would change the strength of the association between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy. Outcomes from these hypotheses tests showed non-significant, meaning that 1) women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology was not a significant predictor of their expectations of their partner's self-disclosure and 2) partner expectations was not found to be a significant moderator of the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy. Speculating on why these findings were non-significant, I will discuss what these findings mean conceptually and describe the outcome of both post-hoc hypotheses tests.

Test for moderation. If a significant moderation effect had been found, this would have indicated that at higher levels of expectations of self-disclosure, men's self-disclosure was more

important for women's emotional intimacy than at lower levels of expectations of self-disclosure. With non-significant findings, however, the contribution of men's self-disclosure to women's emotional intimacy was shown to be equally strong across all levels of women's expectations of self-disclosure. Although this outcome was contradictory to the proposed hypothesis, this finding is still interesting. A non-significant moderation effect indicates that the effect of men's self-disclosure on women's emotional intimacy is the same for women on all levels of expectations. Essentially, the importance of self-disclosure for emotional intimacy is the same for women despite their level of expectation regarding their partner's self-disclosure.

Post-hoc hypothesis one. Having found a non-significant effect for hypothesis three, this hypothesis was re-conceptualized and a post-hoc test for mediation was conducted. Rather than think of women's expectations of self-disclosure as changing the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy, it was proposed that expectations might mediate this relationship. Support was found for this reconceptualized hypothesis. Women's expectation of their partner's self-disclosure was shown to partially mediate the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy. Again, partial mediation signifies two things. First, that men's self-disclosure directly effects women's emotional intimacy, meaning that men's lower levels of emotional self-disclosure significantly predicted their partner's lower levels of emotional intimacy. Second, finding a partial mediation effect also indicates that the effect of men's self-disclosure on women's emotional intimacy happens by way of women's expectations of self-disclosure. In essence, when men self-disclose at higher levels, women's expectations of their partner's self-disclosure are met and this in turn impacts the women's emotional intimacy. This is consistent with the concept of the interpretive filter included in Reis and Shaver's (1988) model in that expectations are the filter through which

women interpret the self-disclosures of their partners. Consider again the prescriptive expectations, understood to be what one believes should happen in an interpersonal relationship (Kelley & Burgoon, 1991). When men do not self-disclose at the level expected by their partners, a violation of expectations occurs and the quality of the relationship is called into question, ultimately influencing emotional intimacy.

Taken together, the outcomes of these tests for moderation and mediation suggest that women with higher expectations do not experience the association of self-disclosure and emotional intimacy differently than those with low expectations, but the impact of men's self-disclosure on women's emotional intimacy happens through women's interpretation of men's self-disclosure as either meeting their expectations or not meeting them. These findings underscore the significance of the interpretive filter and corroborate Mitchell's (2008) finding that the interpretive filter contributes to couples experiences of emotional intimacy.

Test for traditional masculine gender ideology predicting expectations. A non-significant finding for the test of hypothesis two indicated that women's expectations of self-disclosure were not significantly predicted by their own endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology. Conceptually this means that women's expectations of their partner's self-disclosure were not significantly related to their belief that, in a general sense, men should or should not self-disclose their emotions. One explanation for this finding is that traditional masculine gender ideology does not fit within the motives, needs, goals, and fear component as originally proposed. Rather than influencing women's interpretive filter, beliefs about gender ideology might directly moderate the association of self-disclosure and emotional intimacy.

Post-hoc hypothesis two. Since women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology did not predict their expectations of their partner's self-disclosure, another post-hoc

hypothesis was tested to see whether women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology would moderate the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy. Although results from this moderation test were also non-significant, a look at the plot of simple slopes suggested the potential of an interaction effect. So while statistically insignificant, Figure 6 indicates that the influence of men's self-disclosure on women's emotional intimacy may vary based on women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology. Essentially, men's self-disclosure would contribute more or less to women's emotional intimacy depending on the level of endorsed traditional masculine gender ideology. Because of the contradictory findings, however, no specific conclusions were drawn from this post-hoc moderation test.

Limitations

As with any study, this research carries with it certain limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings and reading its conclusions. These limitations are detailed below.

Sample Limitations

Although recruitment efforts successfully attracted a sample similar to the demographics of the 2011 US Census, this was not meant to be a representative sample. One should be cautious in generalizing the findings of this study. Participants in this study were more highly educated than those in a representative sample might have been, so the extension of these findings to those without similar educational opportunities is not possible. Furthermore, the percentages of different Racial/ethnic groups were close to the percentages of the 2011 US Census, but this was still a largely Caucasian sample which limits its generalizability to minority couples (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Another limitation of this sample, both participant recruitment and the

distribution of the survey occurred online, excluding individuals who did not have access to the internet and who did not either receive listserve emails or access sites like Craigslist or Facebook. Finally, self-selection bias may have existed within the data. This means that those responding to this survey on masculinity and emotional intimacy were more likely to have increased interest in this topic and ultimately may have biased the findings

Statistical Limitations

Non-significant findings for the post-hoc test of moderation coupled with the interaction found within its plot of simple slopes, suggests that this study did not have enough power to detect interaction effects. According to Frazier and colleagues (2004), the power to detect interactions is notoriously low, so while disappointing, the non-significant findings were not surprising. Low power due to small effect sizes and measurement error can be addressed by both ensuring the reliability of measurement tools and decreasing within group variance. Balancing the need for reliability and the desire for generalizability, efforts were made to ensure high reliability in measurement tools so as to counteract the within group variance needed for generalizability. Judging from the lower power for testing interactions, it seems that this balance was not quite achieved. It is possible that attempts to increase the generalizability of these findings increased the within-group variances thereby decreasing the power to test interactions. This limitation made the plots of simple slopes essential for a broader picture of the findings, which did allow for some preliminary statements regarding potential interaction effects.

Methodological Limitations

There are a number of procedural limitations important to mention for this work. The first limitation is a consequence of the online methods used for distributing the survey. Specifically, because participants reported on their own behavior, self-report bias was a concern for this data.

It is also possible that social desirability may have influenced participants' responses. Discussions of gender, and specifically masculinity, are value-laden topics for which social expectations likely impacted the responses. A final limitation important to mention, the measure of Expectation Partner of Self-Disclosure (EPSD) was newly created for this study and has not been validated. Initial tests of reliability were done as a part of the exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, but studies further exploring the psychometric properties of this measure are needed. While not ideal, these limitations were intentional compromises made during the development of the study and do not prevent this study from contributing to the discourse.

Theoretical Limitations

It is important to acknowledge that this dissertation relies on a dichotomous understanding of gender. While this fits with the status of the current literature studying the interpersonal process model of intimacy, academics specializing in the social construction of gender challenge this dualistic thinking. They argue that instead of conceptualizing gender as roles that are characteristics of individuals, it is more accurate to think of gender as a cultural pattern that creates false dichotomies to reinforce and maintain power structures. For these reasons, this study cannot speak to the larger dialogue of the social construction of gender.

Study Implications

Implications for Future Research

The current findings suggest that men's traditionalism influences their own levels of self-disclosure which in turn impacts their partner's feelings of emotional intimacy. What is more, the effect of men's self-disclosure on their partner's emotional intimacy occurs by way of their partner's expectations. Drawing from these study findings, there are a number of implications for future research worth mentioning. First, it is seems important that future researchers studying the

interpersonal process model of intimacy (Reis & Shaver, 1988) understand that the dynamics they observe occur in the context of gender socialization. Results from this study showed that gender as a social construction can explain some of the dynamics observed in the interpersonal process model of intimacy and, subsequently, it is shortsighted to conclude that men and women experience emotional intimacy differently simply because they are different. Second, results from this study indicate that accounting for Reis and Shaver's interpretive filter is also important when studying the interpersonal process model of intimacy. Including a measure of the interpretive filter is in the interest of better understanding the effects of self-disclosure on emotional intimacy and documenting how self-disclosure is being received and interpreted by a listening partner. Not including this perceptual element is an oversight and can result in a more narrow understanding of this dynamic.

Suggestions for future research. With the previously stated implications in mind, the following are recommendations for future research. Given the contradictory findings of the post hoc test for moderation, this seems a logical place to start for future research. Retesting whether women's endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology moderates the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's emotional intimacy would be an important contribution to the literature. Essential for this future study, however, would be a larger sample size. The power to detect interactions in this study was limited because of the within-group variance coupled with a moderate sample size, so future studies would need to address these limitations.

Studies examining the different components of the interpretive filter would be interesting expansions of this work. Specifically, authors could look closer at what influences and shapes women's expectations of their partner's self-disclosure. Doing so would provide a clearer picture

of how the interpretive filter operates and would assist clinicians in their efforts to improve emotional intimacy in distressed couples.

Researchers could also investigate what contributes to men's emotional intimacy using similar methods as those used in this study to test whether men's expectation of self-disclosure operates as the interpretive filter between women's self-disclosure and their own emotional intimacy. This would complement the current study findings and provide further evidence that the interpretive filter is an important component of the interpersonal process model of intimacy (Reis & Shaver, 1988).

Finally, because the current study findings were limited in their generalizability to white heterosexual couples, future research could study similar concepts using samples of racially, ethnically, or sexually diverse couples. This direction for future research might be especially interesting and provide an important perspective on the effects of gender ideology on self-disclosure and emotional intimacy. By couching these dynamics within an understanding of intersectionality, investigators could explore how masculine gender ideology intersects with race, ethnic identity and/or sexual orientation and then how this impacts men's self-disclosures, partner expectations, and partner experiences of emotional intimacy.

Implications for Clinical Work

The current study findings have important implications for clinicians working with couples on issues of emotional intimacy. Specifically, it seems important that clinicians encourage vulnerable self-disclosures within couples, but that while doing this, they also attend to the interplay of gendered expectations and the demands of therapy. Results from this study showed that men's self-disclosures were influenced by their endorsement of traditional masculine gender ideology and that this affected their partner's emotional intimacy. This

suggests that traditional masculine gender ideology plays an important role in the process of emotional intimacy. Thus, it is important clinicians acknowledge the social pressure men experience with regard to restricting their emotions and the power they surrender through their vulnerable self-disclosures. While this is important work for men to do, both for the health of their relationship and in the interest of equality among men and women, it is important that clinicians attend to this issue so as to support men in these efforts. Not acknowledging the counterforce of masculine gender ideology diminishes the considerable task men have being vulnerable through emotional expression and further perpetuates the invisibility of these social pressures. Few authors within the family therapy literature have written about this clinical issue. Shepard and Harway (2012) corroborate this point in their book on engaging men in couple therapy by arguing that couple therapy interventions often favor the emotional abilities women are socialized for which gives them advantage in clinical settings. Not attending to this difference can impede a therapist's ability to join with male clients thereby influencing the effectiveness of therapy. Greenman, Faller, and Johnson (2012) do address this issue with regard to Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT), but the majority of authors writing about EFT make little mention of the role masculinity plays in couple's experiences. Since this is a commonly used clinical model for couple therapy, it is important that those both writing about and practicing this model consider this effect.

Conclusions

The findings of this study suggest that understanding gender as a social construction can explain some of the divergent experiences found between men and women when studying the interpersonal process model of intimacy. A test for whether self-disclosure mediates the relationship between traditional masculine gender ideology and emotional intimacy showed a

significant result, which was consistent with previous study findings (Marshall, 2008). And although low power for testing gender traditionalism as a moderator did not offer definitive results, there was some evidence found in the plot of simple slopes that supported gender traditionalism as a moderator of the relationship between self-disclosure and emotional intimacy. While inconclusive, there exists enough evidence in these results to warrant further exploration of how gender traditionalism may moderate the Reis and Shaver (1988) model.

Consistent with Reis and Shaver's (1988) theoretical model, this study also found evidence to support the significance of the interpretive filter found between self-disclosure and emotional intimacy. Conceptualized in this study as expectations, results showed that women's expectations of their partner's self-disclosure significantly mediated the relationship between men's self-disclosure and women's experience of emotional intimacy. This outcome substantiates previous findings (Mitchell, 2008) that the interpretive filter is an important component of the interpersonal process model of intimacy and that it should be considered when studying emotional intimacy in couples. Future research should explore the different aspects of the interpretive filter and how individual dispositional characteristics might influence the process of emotional intimacy in couples.

Building on previous findings, this study contributes to the extant literature by improving our understanding of how gender as a social construction influences couples experiences of emotional intimacy. It also highlights the importance of the interpretive filter, a commonly overlooked component of the interpersonal process model of intimacy.

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Appendix A

Online Survey

Emotional Intimacy and Gender with expectations scale

You are invited to participate in this survey on gender and couples' experiences of emotional intimacy. I am currently a graduate student at the University of Connecticut, and I am conducting this survey as part of my dissertation under the supervision of Dr. Shayne Anderson (Principal Investigator). In conducting this survey, I hope to find out how self-disclosure in romantic relationships is affected by gender. Specifically, I am interested in how much you disclose personally relevant information in your relationship, what your expectations are related to your partners' self-disclosure, what your experience of emotional intimacy is within your relationship, and what you believe are or are not appropriate behaviors for men in relationships.

This survey should take approximately 10 minutes of your time. Your participation is completely voluntary, but should both you and your partner complete this survey, your names can be entered into a raffle for one of three $50 Best Buy gift cards. I will ensure that any identifiable information provided for the raffle is stored separately from the responses to this survey. Furthermore, your responses to this survey will not be shared with your partner and will only be reported as a group summary. A breach of confidentiality constitutes the main risk associated with participating in this study and, subsequently, I have put these and other structures in place to maintain the confidentiality of your identities and responses as best as possible. Although you will only directly benefit from participating in this study if you win the raffle, everyone's participation will contribute to a larger understanding of emotional intimacy in couples.

Please know that you do not have to answer any question that you do not want to and you can stop taking the survey at any time. Also, I am happy to answer any questions you have about this study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact me, Lindsay Edwards (student contact) at lindsayedwards2@gmail.com or my adviser, Dr. Shayne Anderson at shayne.anderson@uconn.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 860-486-8802. The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

To ensure your confidentiality, I recommend that you take this survey alone and away from your partner and that you do not take this survey on a public or work computer. If you are on a public or work computer, be sure to clear your browser following the completion of the survey.

***1. I have read the information above and agree to participate in this study.**

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Emotional Intimacy and Gender with expectations scale

Before starting please read the following statement

This survey uses the term partner to refer to the person with which you are currently in a committed romantic relationship. It is requested that you and your partner take this survey one at a time and separately from each other. If you are in the same room as your partner, please separate before taking this survey. Once you have finished, your partner can return and click on the same link to take the survey for his or herself. If you are not in the same room as your partner, please complete the survey and then forward it to your partner to take.

In order for me to link your responses with your partner's responses, it is important that you include your designated Invitation Number below. This number starts with a 2 and can be found within the emailed invitation after the text "Invitation Number #". Please locate this number and enter it below.

***2. Please enter your Invitation Number here.**

Emotional Intimacy and Gender with expectations scale

***3. Please indicate your gender below.**

- ◯ Female
- ◯ Male

Emotional Intimacy and Gender with expectations scale

The following are statements about the disclosure of thoughts and feelings in romantic relationships.

6. Please indicate how your experiences with your partner contrast with your expectations related to each of the following:

	Much less than what I expect	Slightly less than what I expect	About what I expect	Slightly more than what I expect	Much more than what I expect
Your partner's willingness to talk about her positive feelings related to your relationship is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk about her concerns related to your relationship is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk about the times she has felt ashamed or embarrassed is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk about those things that have hurt her deeply is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk about her private feelings, in general, is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk about issues like her need for closeness and companionship...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk about her past experiences, including sad ones, is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk about what she believes are her shortcomings is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk about her private thoughts, in general, is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk about the feelings she has for you is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk about her thoughts on politics and current events is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk with you about things related to managing a household (housing concerns, etc) is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk with you about things related to managing a family (parenting concerns etc.) is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk with you about her personal interests or hobbies is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk with you about her spiritual or religious beliefs is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Your partner's willingness to talk with you about everyday things (how her day went, the weather etc.) is...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Emotional Intimacy and Gender with expectations scale

7. Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements regarding your own disclosure of your thoughts and feelings to your partner:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I seldom disclose my feelings concerning our relationship with my partner.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I rarely discuss aspects of our relationship that I would like to change.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I rarely discuss certain aspects of our relationship.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I rarely disclose my need for closeness to my partner.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I seldom disclose my need for companionship to my partner.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I rarely tell my partner how she makes me feel.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I let my partner know my real feelings.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I seldom disclose my thoughts concerning our relationship with my partner.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I tell my partner how she makes me feel.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I talk about my feelings concerning our relationship with my partner.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

The following are statements about feelings of closeness in your current romantic relationship

8. Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My partner listens to me when I need someone to talk to.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I can state my feelings without her getting defensive.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I often feel distant from my partner.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
My partner can really understand my hurts and joys.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I feel neglected at times by my partner.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I sometimes feel lonely when we're together.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Emotional Intimacy and Gender with expectations scale

9. The following are statements about what men should or should not do in a general sense. Please indicate how much you agree with each of them.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A man should never admit when others hurt his feelings.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Men should not be to quick to tell others that they care about them.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Men should be detached in emotionally charged situations.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
A man should not react when other people cry.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
One should not be able to tell how a man is feeling by looking at his face.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Fathers should teach their sons to mask fear.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Being a little down in the dumps is not a good reason for a man to act depressed.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
A man should avoid holding his wife's purse at all times.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Men should not borrow money from friends or family members.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I might find it a little silly or embarrassing if a male friend of mine cried over a sad love story.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
A man shouldn't bother with sex unless he can achieve orgasm.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

10. The following are statements about your current romantic relationship in a general sense. Please respond to them by indicating how *satisfied* you are.

	Extremely Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Mixed	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
How *satisfied* are you with your partnership?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
How *satisfied* are you with your significant other as a partner?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
How *satisfied* are you with your relationship with your partner?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Thank you for your patience. You are almost finished with this survey.

Please answer the following demographic questions in order to provide a full account of who has responded to this survey.

11. Please write your age here.

12. Please indicate your race/ethnicity as best represented by the following categories:

- ◯ African American/Black
- ◯ Asian / Asian American
- ◯ Pacific Islander
- ◯ Latino(a) / Chicano(a) / Hispanic
- ◯ Caucasian / European-American / White
- ◯ Native American / Native Alaskan
- ◯ Biracial / multiethnic
- ◯ Other

13. Please select your highest grade of school completed or the highest degree received.

- ◯ No schooling completed, or less than 1 year
- ◯ Nursery, kindergarten, and elementary (grades 1-8)
- ◯ High school (grades 9-12, no degree)
- ◯ High school graduate (or equivalent)
- ◯ Some college (1-4 years, no degree)
- ◯ Associate's degree (including occupational or academic degrees)
- ◯ Bachelor's degree (BA, BS, AB, etc)
- ◯ Master's degree (MA, MS, MENG, MSW, etc)
- ◯ Professional school degree (MD, DDC, JD, etc)
- ◯ Doctorate degree (PhD, EdD, etc)

Emotional Intimacy and Gender with expectations scale

14. How long have you and your partner been in your current romantic relationship with one another? (Please write your answer in years)

15. How many children do you have currently living in your home?

16. In what state are you currently living?

17. Please briefly describe your relationship with your partner (i.e., a committed partnerships but not living together; a committed partnership, not married, but living together; married and living together, etc.).

Emotional Intimacy and Gender with expectations scale

Below are instructions for submitting your name for the raffle.

Only couples where both partners complete the survey can enter their names in the raffle for one of the $50 Best Buy gift card, so it is important that you complete the following step. Your partner will be asked to submit your names, an email address at which you can be contacted, and the completed survey code (shown below) to the investigator for the raffle. Thus, if you would like be included in raffle, it is important that you send this code to your partner.

Completed Survey Code: WATERMELON